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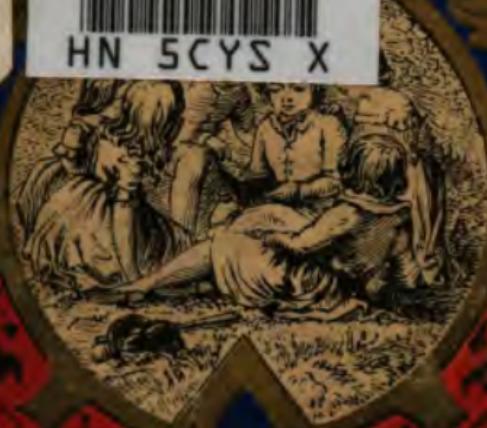
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HOW TO SPEND
A
WEEK
HAPPY



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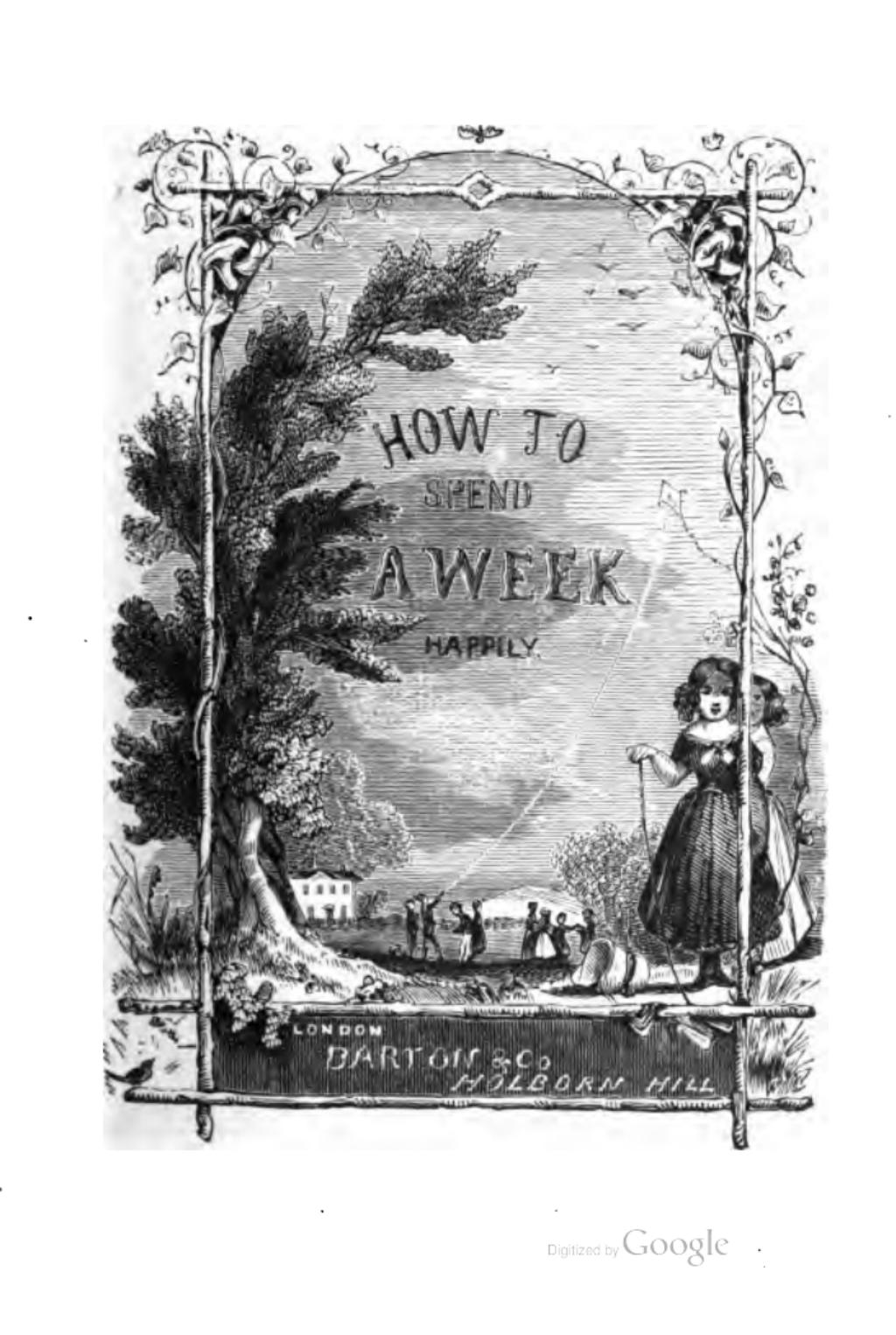
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Mrs. Wm. C. Lane

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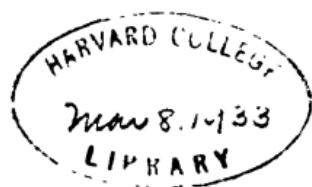
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HOW TO
SPEND A WEEK
HAPPILY,
BY MRS. BURBURY.

LONDON:
DARTON AND CO., HOLBORN HILL.
—
1848.

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Mrs William C. Lane

T

TO

G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.,

WHOSE FRIENDSHIP AND ENCOURAGEMENT

HAVE SUPPORTED,

AND INFLUENCE AND AID ASSISTED

AND CHEERED HER,

MORE ESPECIALLY DURING

A SEASON OF SORROW AND TRIAL,

This Little Book

IS WITH PERMISSION DEDICATED,

AS AN EXPRESSION OF GRATEFUL ESTEEM,

BY

THE AUTHORESS.

Bewdley, October, 23rd, 1848.

HOW TO SPEND A WEEK HAPPILY.

“ How very silent mamma is to-night,” whispered little Fanny Howard to her sister, “ and how red her eyes are—I hope she is not ill.”

“ No, Fanny ; but you know papa went away to-day for a long time, and it is that which makes poor mamma look sad.”

“ I wish we could comfort her, Emily, she always comforts us when we are unhappy, why cannot we do something for her now ?”

“ So we can, dear Fanny. Let us try to be very good indeed, and give her no trouble ; that is the best way, I think, of showing our love : you see she likes to be silent, and quite still, suppose we try to amuse ourselves without troubling her, and then, besides her not being disturbed, she will be pleased to see us doing our duty.”

“ Oh yes !” said Fanny, clapping her hands gently, “ that’s a very good way ; but what shall we do first ? I should like to look at that large book of pictures that stands on the round table behind mamma’s chair, and perhaps you will explain them to me, Emily ?”

“ That I will, love ; can you get the book yourself ? ”

“ Yes, if I carry it very carefully.”

Fanny went, but came back immediately, and, standing by her sister’s side, said—

“ I will not look at the book to-night, Emily.”

“ Why not ? ”

“ Because you said to-day you wanted to read that German tale mamma gave you, and I would just as soon sit here and knit.”

“ You good-natured little thing,” said Emily ; “ so you remember that ; but I know you would rather see those pictures than any thing else, and I can read my book after eight o’clock, when you are gone to bed.”

“ No, Emily, I would rather——”

“ So would I, Missy ; I know what will please you best, so trot off, and fetch the large book ; do you not think I ought to try and please mamma as well as you, and do you not know that she always tells us to help each other, me especially, because I am the eldest ? Now go, and bring the book.”

“ You are two good girls, my darlings,” said their mother, who had listened attentively to this conversation, although the children thought she was not paying any attention to them. “ Come to me,” and she kissed them as they stood beside her ; “ I have heard all you said, and I thank you both, my dear, dear children, not only for your love

now, but for showing me what a long time that love has been in your hearts. Now I *know* you love me; for I am sure you both remember what our dear Saviour said: 'If a man love me, he will keep my commandments;' so when I see you eagerly give up your own wishes to make each other happy, and do your duty to God and to me, I feel that you indeed love me, and attend to what I say; and, as you are so willing to please me, let me see if I cannot find some way of spending the evenings till your papa returns, so as to please us all; go, Fanny, to Miss Norton's room, and ask her if she and your cousins will be so good as to come down to us."

Very soon Fanny came back, holding her kind governess by the hand, and followed by Grace and Blanche; when they were all seated, Mrs. Howard said—

"I have a proposal to make, to which I hope you will all agree. During the time we are alone, I think it would be a very amusing and instructive way of spending the evenings, if each of us in turn were to relate to the others a tale illustrating some precept we have all been taught to respect and love; it will occupy, and at the same time improve our time—what say you?"

"Must I tell a tale, mamma?" asked Fanny.

"Not at first, my love; it will be wise for the oldest of the party to begin."

"I am very glad of that," replied Fanny sedately; "I was afraid my turn would come first, and I am not quite ready."

"You dear, conceited little bee," said Grace, kissing the demure young fairy; "so you thought you were to lead us off, did you?"

"Of course, Cousin Grace, you know you always make me go first at our new French game; but I wish you would not call me conceited, and I don't think I am at all like a bee;" and the little lady drew herself up in a very dignified manner.

Now, I think you are, Miss Fanny, and I think I can prove it. 'What do bees go in search of all day long?"

"Why honey, of course, Cousin Grace."

"And where do they take it, Cousin Fanny?"

"Home, to be sure. I should have thought you knew that," said Fanny, relaxing into a laugh.

"Then what are sweet smiles, and kind words, and loving actions, but this world's honey, Fanny dear; and who brings so full a share to her home in the chosen tree as you, you little bee?"

"If all these things make a bee, Cousin Grace, I do wish I was one, and I am very glad, very glad indeed, that you call me so."

"Well when you have settled about your names, my dears, I shall be glad to hear what you think of my project?"

"It is delightful!" exclaimed all the children.

“ I suppose then, as I am decidedly the most ancient lady of the party, I must tell the first tale ? ”

“ Oh yes ! oh yes ! ”

“ And the subject, too ? — Well then, you all know how great a value I set upon the habit of *obedience*, and will not be surprised that, if I choose the subject most interesting to myself, it will be illustrative of this great virtue. In my opinion it is the most important duty of our lives; all great things spring from it; all evil ones from its neglect. I think my tale will sufficiently prove the truth of this. Do you remember last summer, when we returned from your aunt’s gipsy party to The Hollies, that we passed a fine old house about five miles on the road, respecting which I told you there was a very melancholy story ? ”

“ Oh yes, mamma, and Aunt Lucy asked you to relate the tale to us then, but you said, ‘ No, at some future time when we were more prepared to listen attentively we should hear it.’ Oh yes, I remember quite well—are you going to tell us now ? ” asked Fanny.

“ Yes, but if you wish for the whole, it will be a long story, as well as a sad one.”

“ Oh, we shall be sure to like it, dear mamma.”

THE SKATING PARTY.

“ Many years ago, Winterdyne, that is the name of the estate, passed by the death of its owner into the hands of a gentleman named Temple, who immediately announced his intention of residing there. The place had been long shut up, for the last possessor had other and more lively seats, and for many years no one but an old gardener and his wife had lived there; it was a very large house, and great was the pleasure felt in the neighbourhood when it was known that Colonel Temple and his family had chosen it for a place of permanent residence. In a very short time the solitary appearance of the house and grounds was gone, the place was alive with gardeners, painters, upholsterers and servants; every thing wore the active, busy look of wealth and taste: it was evident the whole proceedings were under the superintendence of an elegant and refined mind; not one of the old trees was cut down, nor the long avenues of stately elms disturbed in their straight line by the destruction of even one piece of timber, to let in ever so beautiful a view; the quaint old walks, and yews, cut into the queer shapes our ancestors loved, were untouched; and on the side of the house looking upon them all was left in its original state; the oak-panelled rooms, with their deep large windows, were care-

fully furnished in the ancient style befitting them, and no gaudy, pretty knick-knacks disturbed the harmony of the arrangements. The opposite side of the mansion, facing the deer park, was of modern structure, and all the most magnificent and luxurious inventions of the London upholsterers were lavished upon the lofty saloons and beautiful staircase. Two ages seemed coexistent in the mass of building and the grounds. On one side you walked through wide dusky rooms, with dark oak walls, and looked through deep windowed recesses, upon a prim and scrupulously straight and square garden, along the walks of which you might well expect to meet some stately dame in farthingale and sacque. On the other side, you looked from immense windows, glazed with large sheets of plate glass, upon an exquisite lawn studded with flower-beds, and enriched with specimens of all the finest shrubs and plants reared in this climate; sleeping below was a noble lake, upon which glided in graceful beauty four splendid swans. Everything had been artfully and tastefully arranged, there was an intermixture of evergreens, with other trees, so that even in winter the view was never desolate, and in the gay days of blossoming June, the sombre hues of arbutus and box only sobered, without obscuring, the lively and radiant colours of the brighter children of the south.

At last, after many months of preparation and expectation, it was known that Colonel Temple and his family were come. One short week, to give them the least possible time to settle themselves, and Winterdyne was besieged with visitors, to whom were introduced, as well as the owner and his wife, four children, Hubert, Clarice, Edgar, and Milicent. My mother, then a young girl of sixteen, lived at The Hollies with her parents, and as it was the nearest residence to Winterdyne, the families soon became very intimate.

Hubert and Clarice were twins, and when they first came into the neighbourhood, about fourteen years old; Edgar a year younger, and Milicent, the pet of the whole house, just ten. A singularly handsome boy was Hubert Temple, but proud, passionate and wayward, acting always upon the impulse of a daring and ungoverned temper, and from being the eldest son, and heir to a large fortune and ancient name, thought of so much importance, that the difficult task of controlling him was seldom effectually attempted: he was naturally of an affectionate and generous disposition, but long indulgence and indomitable pride had made him both selfish and disobedient. Although of a tall and graceful figure, with a brow as fair as his sister's, and hair as dark as the wing of the raven that croaked in the pine-grove by the lake, he was free from the smallest particle of personal vanity;

for he was by far too proud of his name and his talents to indulge in the paltry pride of mere beauty: there were the seeds of many virtues in Hubert Temple, but the baneful spirit of disobedience had been permitted to flourish in the soil, and, like the tendrils of the deadly night-shade, was choking and destroying the fairer flowers.

Clarice, a meek and gentle child, patient and persevering, so unobtrusive as to be rarely noticed by strangers, formed a complete contrast to her twin brother: hers was a beautiful but retiring character, unvalued because unknown, yet in its humble, religious, and earnest goodness, most attractive in the sight of Heaven. Edgar was of a weak, indolent, and good-natured disposition, easily led, and generally following the opinion of the last speaker, not because he was incapable of forming one of his own, but because it saved him the trouble of thinking, and he was so idle that his brother Hubert often told him that if the key to the valley of diamonds lay in a rabbit-hole before him, he would not stoop to pick it up.

“No, very likely not! What is the use of getting all over dirt for nothing? I should not like the trouble of dressing and washing. You might have all the diamonds for me!”

Mrs. Temple, who was in very delicate health, always fancied that Edgar was ill, and allowed

him to be as idle and listless as he pleased, lest he should increase his fancied malady; and though the boy felt sometimes annoyed at being so often on the sick-list, yet he escaped so many lessons, was suffered to do others in so slovenly a manner, and had so much delicious invalid cookery, that he usually resigned himself to her opinion very contentedly.

Milicent, or Milly, as she was oftener called, the youngest of the four, was the prettiest, most playful, and mischievous little thing in existence; there was no frolic in the house of which she was not a ring-leader: she was the darling of her father and mother, the pet of everybody, and when reproved, which was very seldom, she had a way of looking through her long curled eyelashes with a sort of demure fun, as if wondering how much more you could find in your heart to say, and then, tossing back the thick brown ringlets hanging nearly to her waist, would throw her arms round you, and silencing your rebuke with kisses, effectually put an end to the lecture. This was her mode with those she loved; but with anybody else who presumed to exert authority over her sovereign will, she would stamp her tiny foot, and shaking her little head in a furious passion, seldom failed in getting her own way. Above every one she was the pride and torment of her brother Hubert; not a merry trick that she could imagine but she played upon him: she cut

deep figures on his balls with a penknife, letting out all the stuffing, drove ragged-headed nails into his cricket-bats, unfastened his fishing-lines from the side of the lake, and did every conceivable mischief her active fancy could suggest; then hid herself to see his rage, and hear his threats of vengeance against her whom he well knew to be the offender. Yet with all her tiresome pranks Hubert loved her better than either Clarice or Edgar, and she in return idolized him, and thought that the admirable Crichton, of whom she had heard such wonderful things, was nothing—nothing at all to her favourite brother. To Miss Mansfield, their governess, Milly paid very little attention, and though she really liked her very much for her unfailing patience and good-nature, she constantly disobeyed and disregarded her wishes; her punishments were continually either evaded or remitted, and the consequence was, of course, that at ten years old she knew very much less than any well-disciplined child of seven.

“It is of no use trying, I cannot do it,” said Milly, pouting over a piece of patchwork she was making.

“Why not, my dear?”

“It’s so difficult.”

“Not very, I think, if you really try.”

“But it is—the sides are not even!” and she pulled them pettishly apart again.

" It will neither be easy *nor* even, Milly, if you give way to impatience, the pieces were perfectly straight when you had them."

" I shall not try any longer, I will give it up."

" No, Milly, you must finish the star I gave you—you chose the work yourself; and, remember, when you did so, I told you I would not be at the trouble of cutting and placing the papers, unless you promised to finish it when you had it."

" Yes, but I did not say *when*—I did not to-day."

" No, but you meant it; and so did I, therefore I shall expect to have it done."

" But I cannot do it."

" Try, nothing is done without trying."

" I want to go and see Hubert's rabbits, I promised to feed them for him."

" So you shall when you have finished your work."

" I can come back presently."

" No Milly, I shall not permit you to leave this room until you have finished that star."

" Then I shall be here all day;" and the child began to cry, and after a few minutes, finding that Miss Mansfield took no notice of her, she commenced stamping her feet, and breaking her thread into small pieces. Miss Mansfield looked at her watch.

" At one o'clock, Milly, I am going to the village with Clarice, to purchase some silks: it wants nearly

half an hour of the time; if you bring me your work finished by then you shall accompany us, if not we shall go without you."

Her governess left the room, and in a fit of passion Milly threw her patchwork in all directions. The walk to the village was a great object to her just then, for she particularly wished to buy some v. geraniums for her garden, and she wanted to c.ose them: her mamma was not at home, and s. : saw no means of evading the threatened punishment but by obedience, and that she felt by far too stubborn to yield, if it were possible to obtain her wish in any other way; she walked about, and looked out of the window on the lawn, expecting, I suppose, the trees or birds to come in and help her, and cried until the bell, which always rang five minutes before one o'clock, began. It was not too late for a willing and obedient child to have completed the star, even then, but instead of setting to work in such a spirit, she threw herself on the floor by the window, and sobbed.

Clarice ran by the window dressed, and she heard her mother's voice, saying, "It is very warm out of the shade along the high road, so if you and the children like to have my carriage, the ponies shall not be taken out while you get ready, and Watson shall drive you into the village."

"Oh! thank you, thank you, mamma!" said Clarice.

"As you return you can go round by The Hollies, and take this note to Mrs. Murray; remember you bring me an answer, it will spare me the trouble of going out again, and you and Milly will see the presents the children had yesterday on Sarah's birthday; you may stay as long as Miss Mansfield can allow you."

"What a treat, Clarice, is it not?" asked her governess.

"I will make haste; but where is Milly—is she ready?"

"She is finishing some work in the school-room, it is done by this time, I have no doubt."

"Oh! I hope so, for her pet friend Marion is at The Hollies!"

With feelings that every child can well imagine, Milly in her corner listened to this conversation. Such a combination of delights! a drive in her mamma's pretty pony carriage to the village, then a visit to her favourite friends, and the sight of the gay London presents, were all irresistible. She looked up at the school-room clock, in a minute it would strike one, then at her scattered work. She had still time to amend, for she knew that if she confessed her fault to her kind governess, and showed a penitent and active spirit, she would be forgiven; but, unfortunately, obedience was the last thing she felt inclined to show; and she had just resolved to obtain her mamma's permission to

go, which she was sure Miss Mansfield would not contradict, when turning hastily round she upset her sister's work-box, and there fell from it a star of the same pattern as the one over which she had rebelled. She eagerly seized it, without at first a distinct idea of what she was going to do ; but she heard Miss Mansfield's footstep crossing the hall : she was coming to know if her task was done, and, in a moment, before she had time to think of the grievous sin she was committing, she ran forward to meet her with Clarice's work in her hand.

“ Ah ! have you finished ? ” said her governess, taking it from her, and examining it, not noticing that she made no reply ; “ very well indeed, my love ! I am rejoiced at your obedience, and I am sure you will enjoy your reward all the more that you have earned it.” Milly trembled from head to foot : she had spoken no words of falsehood, but she felt that she had acted one, and the drive and visit lost all value in her eyes ; the first sin of disobedience had already induced another to screen it, where would it end ? Poor child ! poor child !

During the first hour Milly was very silent, but when she arrived at The Hollies, she had reconciled herself by determining to make her star as soon as she returned, put Clarice's back again into her box, and then, thought the mistaken child, no harm will be done. The crime in the sight of God she never considered ; all she feared was public exposure,

and if that could be avoided, she forgot the sin. When she got home, she ran to the school-room to pick up the pieces of her patchwork, for it was a very singular pattern, part of a dress brought from Paris by her mamma, and the fragment out of which Miss Mansfield had carefully cut her and Clarice the hexagons they wanted, was entirely used. The instant she entered, she saw that some one had been putting tidily away all she had left about, and she hunted with a beating heart for the pieces of print, but could find none: in eager haste she opened every book, music-roll, and work-basket, but nowhere were they to be seen. The windows had been left open, and she thought that perhaps they had been blown away; but after a diligent search over the lawn, and under all the shrubs, where she hoped they might have lodged, she was obliged to give it up in despair: she dared not make any inquiry from the housemaid, whose work it was to attend upon the school-room, and could do nothing but vainly hope that Clarice would not miss her star; but this chance was destroyed when her sister and Miss Mansfield entered, and Clarice said,

“ Now let us get our work, and talk about to-day, shall we, Milly ? ”—she went to her box, and after a few minutes exclaimed,

“ Have you removed any work from here, Miss Mansfield ? ”

“ No, my dear ; why ?”

“ Because some one has taken my blue patch-work star. I put it here this morning when I went out.”

“ No one would take it, you must have overlooked it.”

“ Well, I will look again—no—see, Miss Mansfield, it is not here, is it ?”

“ Search in your bag, then ; it was on the table, very likely it was put in there.”

Clarice turned every thing out, and opened the tidy little bundles, but no star was visible.

“ How provoking ! Milly, dear, have you seen it ?”

Milly pretended to be too busy reading a book she had brought home to hear her sister’s question.

“ I am so vexed—Milly, do help me to look ;” she rummaged every corner, and repeated, “ do come, Milly.”

“ What is the use of making so much fuss, Clarice ? I dare say you have lost it,” said Milly.

“ No, that I have not, I liked it too much. Are you sure you have not seen it, Milly dear ?”

“ If you had it in your box how could I see it ?” she answered, pettishly.

“ I am very sorry, Clarice,” said Miss Mansfield, “ for there is not an atom left ! Are you sure you put it away ?”

“ Oh, yes ! and I stuck three needles on the

other side, for fear I should lose them ; I know I am not mistaken ! ”

How Milly trembled ; she had never observed in her haste that anything was on the star, and she knew that if the needles were still there, and her governess found them, the disgraceful secret would be discovered.

“ There seems nothing but trouble connected with the patchwork,” said the governess ; “ first, Milly’s distress, though she obeyed my wishes at last, and now your misfortune.”

“ I would almost sooner have lost anything I have than that ! May I ring, Miss Mansfield, and ask Mary if she saw it when she put the room to rights ? ”

“ Yes, certainly.”

“ Oh, no, miss ! ” said the servant in reply to her question ; “ I did not see a star like that you speak of, but I found several small bits of the same sort as Mrs. Temple’s dress lying about, and I thought they were of no use, so I threw them away with the dust.”

“ They could not be the same, Mary, for I used every particle that remained to cut the twelve pieces for the young ladies ; I did not leave any.”

“ Perhaps I can pick them up again ma’am ; shall I try ? ”

“ Not unless you are sure they are the same that Miss Temple has lost ; go into my room, Clarice,

and bring Milly's star from my table, I laid it down when I went to dress."

Milly sprang up, but her governess said—"No, not you my love. Your sister will oblige me." She sat down with a feeling of despair, and through her ringlets watched the door.

Clarice returned, her face was deadly pale, and she never glanced at her sister; but, taking the patchwork to Miss Mansfield, said in a trembling voice, which she vainly tried to steady, "Here it is; I met mamma on the stairs, and I have asked her to give me a slip from her new pink dress, for I will have my centre pink, as Milly's is blue, so never mind troubling Mary to look in the dust."

"Oh, you'll find it some day my love; but I think it will really be better to have different colours, for you see, Clarice, Milly has so improved in her work that the long stitches will not be so conspicuous which is hers; really Milly, I never saw such work so well before."

Clarice did not venture to look at her, she had found the needles on the back of the star, and knew it for her own. At first she fancied that Milly in a hurry had given the one piece of work by mistake for the other; but the disobedience of the morning, her silence during the drive, and her evident unwillingness to join in the search, too truly told her it was no mistake, but a deliberate falsehood.

Miss Mansfield soon after left the room, and the children were alone. Milly bent her head closely over her book, and waited in expectation of her sister speaking on the subject that she well knew occupied her thoughts; but the silence remained unbroken, until Hubert called out from the lawn, "Come here Milly, I've caught such a splendid fish."

She jumped up, and met Clarice's eyes, brimming with tears, full upon her.

"Don't be vexed, Clarice, I did not mean to tell a story; but Miss Mansfield was so cross, and she insisted upon my doing that nasty patchwork, and I couldn't, and then—and then—"

"Come, Milly, don't be a month," said Hubert.

"I am very much obliged to you, Clarice dear, for your not telling, and I'll never do so again, indeed I never will; but Miss Mansfield knew that it was impossible for me to make it, and she—"

"If you don't come I shall go," called Hubert, impatiently; and without again meeting her sister's grieved face, she ran off to him.

"Pray come in and join us, we want a fellow like you," said Edward Dacey to Hubert, as he saw him looking wistfully over the gate of his father's field, where he and several lads were playing at cricket. He was a vulgar and ill-educated boy,

son of a retired brewer at Harbourne, whose family had been ever since the arrival of the Temples striving to become acquainted with them; every sort of civility had been forced upon Mrs. Temple and Clarice by Mrs. Dacey, but although received with perfect courtesy, no intimacy had ensued. Flatteries and smiles were tried in vain even with Milly, for though she was not displeased to hear herself called "Angel," and "Fairy," and "Beauty," whenever she met the ladies, she had too much of her mother's good taste not to feel that it was insincere. All deference and exaggerated respect was shown to the colonel by the brewer at parish meetings, vestries, and elections; but the high-bred soldier was annoyed instead of conciliated by such undue servility; and, foiled everywhere, the sons next tried to win their way through Hubert and Edgar. But Colonel Temple had, in the most positive terms, forbade the slightest intimacy, and hitherto all their inducements had been vainly held out, and the boys had carefully respected their parent's prohibition. But on this day Hubert was in a very angry mood; he had been disappointed of receiving a Newfoundland puppy he was expecting from his uncle, and in an extremely ill temper had come upon this party playing at cricket with the young Daceys. They were practising for a match between the boys of Harbourne and the pupils of the Grammar School.

At first, after declining the invitation to enter the ground, Hubert moved away from the gate, for all further conversation than was absolutely necessary for courtesy's sake had been forbidden; but Edward Dacey so earnestly appealed to him for his opinion upon a disputed point in the game, that little by little he suffered himself to be drawn into a discussion.

"I know you are wrong, Temple," said one of his own companions who was in the group, after hearing his decision.

"Well, if I am, then my uncle is, and he is one of the oldest members of the famous club in London."

"That may be, but still I say you are wrong."

"But I tell you, Mostyn, I have heard the question settled over and over again."

"So have I, but not as you say."

Hubert began to grow angry; he was a very clever batsman, and proud of his skill.

"If I was there I would soon show you," said he.

"Well, come in then."

"No, not now; I cannot," he replied, his father's interdict returning to his memory.

"Why not? If you don't I shall think you a boaster."

"Just as you like; but come to-morrow to Winterdyne and I will convince you," said Hubert, turning to go.

"Then, if you can, why don't you do it here—why cannot you come in?"

"Do, Mr. Temple," urged Edward, "it is a capital ground—true and level."

"Not to-night, thank you."

"He's afraid of his father," said a little boy's voice.

In a moment Hubert was over the gate, and in the midst of the party; once there, all recollection of his parent's displeasure vanished, and he was absorbed in the game. He was unquestionably the best cricketer of them all, and the Daceys, proud of having him among them, administered large doses of flattery with great adroitness. He was leaning on his bat, when a loud exclamation behind startled and made him look round, it was Mrs. Dacey.

"How do you do, sir—glad to see you—hope you are well? Oh, Mr. Temple, this is charming; quite an unexpected pleasure. I hope the colonel and your dear mamma are well."

"Quite well, ma'am, thank you," replied Hubert, recalled to a sense of his disobedience by the sound of Mrs. Dacey's voice.

"How glad my sons must be of your assistance, Mr. Temple, they want sadly to beat those grammar school boys; and, now they have you, they are sure."

"But I do not belong to their club."

“Oh, but they will be too delighted that you should. Edward, William, come here; Mr. Temple says that he does not belong to your club, but of course you can admit him at any moment.”

“Indeed, madam—”

“Pray do not apologize; it will be a pleasure.”

“Oh no, Mrs. Dacey, not now.”

“It will be no inconvenience at all, Mr. Temple, for such an acquisition as you—they will be honoured, I am sure.”

“You overrate my powers, madam; I could be of no use, indeed.”

“What, the famous Mr. Temple! Why I have heard nothing but lamentations that you were not one of them, ever since the club has been formed. We must have you.”

“But my father—” said Hubert, almost desperate.

“Oh, the colonel will make no objection, I am certain. If he does, Mr. Dacey can set all right; don’t be *afraid*.”

Oh that unlucky word! it upset all his good resolutions; he had not moral courage to avow boldly a proper subordination to his father’s wish; and, sooner than a silly scheming woman should think him afraid (as he ought to have been), he preferred breaking a parent’s command.

“Temple has joined us! Temple has joined us! Say good-bye to your chance, my boys,” shouted the

Harbourne eleven ; and, before the bewildered lad well knew what they were about, they had carried him to the tent, put him on a stool, and gathering round, huzzaed loudly.

“ What a torment those Daceys are,” said Colonel Temple to his wife, at breakfast the next day, opening a letter which a servant gave to him ; “ here’s an epistle from that incorrigible lady, talking about some cricket match. Hey! what is this? ‘ Hopes we will join them at a collation in the tent after the sport, at which Mr. Temple will doubtless distinguish himself in the manner of which he gave such excellent promise last night.’ What does she mean, can you guess, my dear ? What Mr. Temple ? Charles is not down, and even if he were, he would never go there, that’s clear ; she must be dreaming.”

“ Oh, it’s some mistake.”

The colonel thought a moment, then rang the bell.

“ Send Master Temple here.”

He came.

“ Hubert, I have just received a very strange note from Mrs. Dacey ; I do not understand it at all ; she speaks of some Mr. Temple having joined their club ; your uncle Charles is not here, and there is no one else of the name that I can think of.”

Hubert looked down.

“ Surely it is not you? After my positive commands, it cannot be.”

Hubert did not reply.

“ Speak, sir; have you disobeyed me?”

“ Last night I came upon them by chance, and they persuaded me; they said I was afraid,—and—”

“ And what? You acted against my positive prohibition, and joined yourself with those to whom I desired you never unnecessarily even to speak !”

“ It was quite by accident, father.”

“ You annoy me seriously, Hubert; I thought you had too much gentlemanly feeling to find any pleasure in associating with such a family as those Daceys—vulgar purseproud boys; I should think you cannot have an idea in common with them.”

“ Mostyn was there, father.”

“ So much the worse; but if Mr. Mostyn allows his son such unfit companions, I do not; and yet, not contented with going into their field, you must join their club !”

“ Father, I never intended—”

“ Silence, sir; how dare you attempt to excuse yourself? See what you have compelled me to do, to screen your disobedience I must go to the house of people I detest. I am exceedingly displeased—leave the room, sir.”

Hubert did so, and he knew that all his father would say to him upon the subject was over; so

in this instance, as in many others, he presumed upon his parent's indulgence, and, instead of being punished and debarred from going to the cricket match, he was forgiven, and spent the day as usual.

“Now good-bye, youngsters; do not fail to be home at eleven o'clock to a minute.”

“Eleven o'clock, papa, how early!—and the nights are so light now.”

“Yes, but you must positively promise to be here then, or I cannot let you go; you will have a beautiful drive. I shall send the carriage at half-past ten, do not keep it waiting.”

“But, dear papa,” pleaded Edgar.

“No buts, my boys; if you cannot promise, do not go.”

“If we are pressed to stay?”

“That you are sure to be; but never mind, you must come back.”

And off went the young Temples to join a party at The Hollies, met to celebrate my mother's birthday; it was a lovely night in July, and after tea, when the sun was set, it was settled that they should dance on the lawn under the large acacias, just then in their beauty. The piano was brought to the open window, and some country dances were commenced with spirit. Hubert was the life of the assembly, with his gay jests, and untiring

activity, he kept them all in a perpetual round of delight; and when the dew fell, and the bright moon rose, warning them out of the open air, he was the first to propose that they should go into the house, and act proverbs. In a short time the scene was changed, and he was just dressed in a grotesque style to personate an old woman, when Clarice, who in her quiet way had been distinguishing herself greatly among the actors, went up to him and whispered, "It has struck ten, Hubert, we had better go after this game is finished."

"Oh, nonsense; I am only just beginning to enjoy myself."

"But remember what papa said."

"He was only joking—I do not mean to go yet."

"Go yet! of course not, what an idea!" exclaimed the party.

"Indeed we must, the carriage will be here directly," said Clarice.

"Let it wait then."

"Yes, let the horses be put up for half an hour, pray do," said one.

"Oh, Clarice, if you go, you 'll quite break up the party."

"Indeed I must, I promised papa."

"But half an hour, only half an hour."

"I am very sorry; but when the carriage comes we must go."

"Must you really, Hubert?"

“Oh no, it’s only one of Clarice’s fancies.”

“Do you forget, Hubert, how particular papa was; he said if you did not promise to be at home by eleven, you were not to come.”

“Yes, but even by your own account, the matter rests with me; my father spoke to me, and I made, as you say, the promise; you did not; so whether we go or not you’ll have no blame; and now pray be easy.”

“That’s right, let Hubert settle it.”

“Papa is sure not to be angry with Hubert; I dare say he only said eleven, because he meant us not to be *very* late; he will not mind half an hour,” said Milly.

“No to be sure—now, Temple, let’s go on with the proverb—*what was it?*”

“No rose without thorns.”

“Yes,” said Hubert, laughing, “I am the rose just now, and Clarice my thorn—what a plague girls are!”

“Oh Hubert—Oh Master Temple,” said the young ladies.

“Not all—not all, only sisters.”

“Very well, sir, then as we cannot be worse than plagues I will do something by way of asserting our dignity; so woe to the smart new fishing tackle I saw on the table this morning—woe,” said Milly, as he turned into another room.

A servant entered, and whispered to Clarice,

“The carriage is come, Miss Temple, but the coachman says he will wait if you wish it.”

She went to her brother.

“Watson is here, Hubert, let us say good night.”

“I don’t mean to go yet.”

“Pray do, it is quite time.”

“I’ve made up my mind, let the carriage wait; surely it will do those horses no harm to stand in harness half an hour.”

“Of course not—my father never says anything to me if I keep ours out till twelve o’clock, when I’m at a party like this. I am not such a baby that I can’t be trusted, no more are you, I should think, Temple,” said Alfred Mostyn.

“That is not it, Master Mostyn, papa would trust Hubert till one or two, or all night, I dare say; but when he says expressly, ‘come home at eleven,’ he means us to obey him.”

“Oh, no doubt you are right, Miss Temple; young ladies always are, I believe; only you see I have thrown off my sister’s leading strings, and forgot that Temple here was wearing his yet,” replied Alfred, with a sneering bow.

Clarice coloured to her temples; she was a very modest child, and, like all retiring people, greatly dreaded ridicule; but she knew that she was right, and the memory of her aunt’s lessons nerved her to persevere in her duty.

"I will not be dictated to by a girl, Clarice—so pray let me alone."

"Then I must go by myself with Milly."

"What folly—and so make Watson come back in half an hour for me; he won't have got home before it will be time to start again."

"Then come now, dear Hubert."

"I will not; you may do as you please, leave me to do the same; if you choose to make a merit of returning, and make my father cross, by having to send out the horses again for me, do so; you good young ladies are never very kind and considerate when you come to be tried."

"Do not speak so unkindly, Hubert; you know very well I would not make papa angry with you, but I must keep our promise."

"That's all an excuse, Clarice; if any promise was made, I made it, my father never spoke to you."

"No, but he *meant* us all; we were one party, and his word to one was the same as to us all."

"Don't preach, Clarice; you can't think how unbecoming it is."

"Must I go alone, then," she asked, pleadingly.

"As you like," replied he, turning away as he caught Mostyn's eye fixed upon him; "come, now for the proverb: who goes out?"

"Bravo, Temple. I'm glad to see you have

mustered up courage to think for yourself. Good night, Miss Temple, I will drive your brothers home, it will only be a couple of miles out of my way, and our man is a capital fellow, he will not mind that, I often do him a good turn, so do not send back for them."

Clarice bowed with a sad heart, and went in search of Milly, who was soon found in another room, attiring for the part of a witch in the next charade.

"Oh Clarice, we are going to have such fun; did you ever see such a figure as I am?"

"Not often, indeed, but it's past ten, the carriage is here, and I am come for you, my love."

"Come for me?—I thought Hubert had made up his mind to stay."

"So he has Milly, but that has nothing to do with you and me; we promised to be home at eleven, and if we do not make great haste, we shall not keep our word."

"I never promised."

"No, nor I in words, but we let Hubert do so in the name of all the party, and we were allowed to come upon the faith of its being fulfilled, so we must go."

"But I never told him to speak for me."

"Perhaps not, Milly, but you did not prevent him."

"I did not know I should want to stop; it's too

bad of you, Clarice, to tease me so," said Milly, beginning to cry.

" 'If you cannot promise, don't go,' papa said."

" Yes, to Hubert, but if he does not return, I don't see why I should give up my game, and I was just going to be so happy."

" I am very sorry indeed to vex you, still we must do what is right, you know, even if it is not always the most agreeable, and the sooner it's done, Milly, the sooner the trouble is over, so pop off those queer looking things, and come; it is such a lovely night—the moon makes it as light as day, we shall have a beautiful drive."

" They 'll miss me so—I was to be the witch—and they will laugh at me for going so soon; nobody is going yet; even the little Churchills, and they are not so old as I am," said Milly, sobbing.

" Never mind, they have only a mile to go, and we have five."

" But Caroline will laugh at me for a baby."

" And if she does, Milly, will that make you one; and because she is so silly as to laugh, which I don't think she will, should it make us wicked enough to be disobedient to papa?"

" But I did not promise, so I cannot be disobedient; and if I was, just this once, I know papa would forgive me. Nobody is so precise as you are—you are quite an old maid."

"Rather a juvenile specimen," said Clarice, laughing, "but come, darling."

"Let me go back with Hubert and Edgar."

"No, they will return with Alfred Mostyn, if papa does not choose to send the carriage again—and it would not be right for you to be with them."

"How tired I am of hearing you talk of what is right; you are as bad as Aunt Constance."

"Milly, I will not stay any longer, we shall be too late now, I am afraid; we have a plain duty to do, and we must do it. 'Honour thy father and thy mother,' is God's commandment, and if we disobey them, we are breaking his law."

Milly sat down and cried passionately; she saw her sister was in earnest, and she determined not to forward her wishes by taking off for herself any of the trappings she wore; but, by quiet perseverance, Clarice in time unclasped, and unpinned, and untied them all; and sending a farewell message to their hostess, lest the sight of the gay party again should awaken fresh regrets, she lifted the sulky child into the carriage and drove off.

When they reached the top of that long avenue of lime-trees which you admired so much the day we passed it returning from the pic-nic, they saw their father and mother walking up and down the terrace, enjoying the moonlight, and evidently watching for them. .

“That’s right, good children, I am glad to see you: home to a minute,” said the colonel, as he opened the door of their vehicle.

Clarice alighted.

“Where are the boys?—Oh, got out for a walk, I suppose—quite right; but I hope they will not be long—I’ve such a treat for you. Now, Milly you puss, jump out.”

“Do not be angry, papa,” said Clarice.

“What at, what at, child? What’s the matter? Hubert has not been driving, and thrown the horses down, hey?”

“Oh, no, sir,” said Watson; “I never give up the reins to any one but you, sir.”

“Well then, what is it—where is the boy?”

“The young gentlemen did not come back with us sir; Master Hubert sent out word I was to go again, if so be that you would not let him return with Mr. Mostyn’s sons.”

“Not come with you! What does he mean girls? Did not your brothers obey me, and leave when I sent for them?”

“Hubert thought, papa, that as they were so very—”

“Did he come?—answer me at once, did he come?”

“No, papa,” replied Clarice, in a low voice.

“Just as usual; he shall be severely punished,” said the colonel, in great displeasure.

"Oh no, dearest papa, he did not mean to make you angry, he only wished to stay half an hour longer, and Alfred Mostyn promised to bring him home, so it will cause you no trouble. Do not punish him, pray do not."

"He did not care whether I was angry or not—it is always the case with that boy. I suppose you were enjoying yourselves as much as he was, and would quite as well have liked to stay, yet you could come; but I must say, Clarice, you are invariably attentive to my wishes, and now you shall have the reward I intended for him: he ought to suffer for his disobedience. I will not allow him to fancy he can do as he pleases. Put the horses up, Watson, I shall not send them out again, and bid that man come here. My sons are not returned, Mr. Thompson," added he, addressing the man; "so I cannot take those black ponies, but I think you said both the grey ones would carry a lady?"

"Yes, sir, they are thoroughly broken in, and so tractable, that a little girl could guide them."

"Then bring the pair round, if you please, and if my daughters like them, I will buy them instead of the black ones I first chose—it will be the same to you?"

"Oh yes, sir, quite!"

"Are they for us? Oh, dear papa, are you going to give them to us for our very own?" cried Milly, whose sulks had vanished at the mention of such a

project, and who was now dancing about as if she were receiving a well-merited token of her father's approbation.

"If you like them, but perhaps you may not," said Colonel Temple.

"Oh, well, if that's the only chance against us—Oh, Clarice, see what darling beauties," and she ran to meet the pretty creatures that, led by their master, now trotted up all ready saddled. Both the girls had learned to ride, and when they were lifted into their seats they cantered up and down the avenue with perfect ease and grace.

"Well, do you like them?" asked their father, when they returned.

"Like them, oh yes, dear papa, I love them!" said Milly.

"And you Clarice?"

"Oh, very, very much, I never rode a pony with such easy paces, it is delightful."

"You may canter once more down the road to try their speed, notwithstanding those smart muslin frocks, and then go round to the stables. Watson will meet you, tell him they are your own, and to put them into the loose boxes to-night."

They rode off, but Clarice soon turned back, and coming up to the colonel, who was talking to the horse-dealer, said—

"May I speak to you, papa?"

"Yes, child; what's the matter, pony lame?"

"No, but I want to ask you something by yourself."

"A secret, eh!—some girl's whim, I suppose—well, come here."

"Dear papa, do not think I am ungrateful, or that I do not like this pretty pony exceedingly; but Hubert will be so disappointed and mortified, and indeed he did not mean to displease you, so if you would be so kind as to let him have the pony you intended, instead of me, I should be so grateful; and Milly, I know, will let me ride hers sometimes, so I shall lose nothing, and he will never disobey you again, I'm sure—do, dear papa."

"Clarice, you are a good child, and a very affectionate sister; for your sake, I wish I could grant your request, but Hubert must learn to obey me, and if I cannot teach him by indulgence, I must by punishment. You deserve a reward for the respect you have paid to my wishes this evening, so do not say any more, it is useless—now go off."

Clarice saw the animals led to the stables with a sad heart for her brother's vexation, but Milly was in ecstacies; it never occurred to her that her submission had been compulsory, and that in honesty, as a reward for it, she had no more right to receive the pony than Hubert or Edgar.

I am now coming to the sad part of my tale: in a year after the affair of the ponies, Hubert was

sent to Eton ; he had become perfectly unmanageable, and his father, finding that he was invariably insubordinate and self-willed, presuming upon the doting love felt for him by his parents, determined to try the discipline of a public school. Nothing could exceed the boy's delight when he was told of the arrangement ; he had no fear of the studies he was going to, for he felt the most perfect confidence in his powers, and the idea of companions of his own age and rank, the boating parties and merry frolics, of which he had heard his father and uncle tell such amusing anecdotes, and the sight of fresh places, filled his mind with joy. His mother's tears at parting with him for the first time, even his favourite Milly's loud sorrow, and the grave face of his father, failed to make him thoughtful ; continued disobedience had done its sure and destructive work ; he had become more than ever selfish, arrogant, and unfeeling.

At last he went, and from his daring courage, great self-confidence, and good old name with which his proud associates could find no fault, he experienced fewer annoyances than young Etonians generally encounter. Though less learned than many younger boys, no one thought of making him a fag : it was tried once, but Hubert replied to the rough commands of his self-elected master, first by coolly neglecting them ; then, upon a repetition, by such a scientific thrashing, that his baffled

tormentor ever after treated him with most particular respect. All the evil of his character, none of the good, was now being fostered ; his talents, not his disposition and heart, were cultivated ; and his pride became insupportable.

One day he and a party of boys stood in the large court looking at his uncle's horses being led about, waiting while their owner paid a visit to the master, when Lord John Wallace said,

“ Those are splendid animals, Temple ; I do not think my father has finer in his stables !”

“ Probably not,” replied Hubert, coolly ; “ I believe that bay is the descendant of an Arabian, brought home by an ancestor of ours from the Crusades.”

“ Ah, squire to some of the thousand landless knights who swarmed in those days,” said Lord John, winking to the rest.

“ I scarcely think so, seeing that he was brother in arms to Baldwin, brother of the great Godfrey of Boulogne, and one of the seven knights who, with Hugh de Pajeno, and Godfrey de St. Ulde-mar, established the order of the Templars.”

“ Oh, mercy ! mercy !” cried Lord John, putting up his hands ; “ I did not mean to bring down upon our stupid heads such a thunder of eloquent research. Godfrey the First, or Second, did you say ? I humbly beg your pardon, and your horses' and your ancestors' too ! I did

not know that we stood in such illustrious presence!"

"Do not make me think you envious, Lord John," said Hubert, reddening at the laugh of the amused party.

"I well may be, Temple, for I am much in the unhappy plight of the French minister who, when he was asked what family he came of, said that he really did not know, for though there were three sons who followed Noah out of the ark, he grieved to say that he could not positively tell from which he was descended. It really is very mortifying, but I will ask my father particularly at vacation, for it's too bad not to know whether I am Shem's son, or Japhet's, or Ham's."

The first Christmas holidays were come, and at Winterdyne there was great joy and preparation for the heir's return. All the family gathered together in one of the wide windows looking down the avenue. The snow was falling fast, and every now and then the heavy air was darkened by a white shower, which, driven by the wind, rushed as if it were frightened in all directions. A blazing fire burned in the grate, an excellent luncheon was laid upon the table, slippers had been put to warm, (as if a young Etonian travelling in a close carriage would descend to use them,) and all looked inviting and home-like: twenty times had fresh coals been

piled high up the chimney, and the eager group at the windows continually changed their places for some other, where they fancied they could see quicker; but it was nearly dark when, the sound being deadened by the snow, a carriage and four at full speed came dashing up the avenue, and springing out, followed by a companion he had not thought fit to ask leave to bring, Hubert was in the midst of his family. He was much grown, and although really pleased to see his parents and sisters, even in this first moment of reunion, his pride was gratified by the appearance of wealth and taste, which he hoped would duly impress his friend, who, upon being asked to do so, he introduced to his father and mother as—

“Lord John Wallace, a son of the Duke of Lanark.”

“You are very welcome,” said Colonel Temple; your father and I were at Eton and Cambridge together. I am very glad to see you—though, if my son here had told me of the pleasure you intended giving us, I would have mustered a few lads to meet you—however, we’ll settle about that after dinner.”

“Thank you, sir; but with that glorious lake, a good frost, and a pair of skates, we can want nothing more, I am sure!”

“You will find this but a poor place, and very dull, after Wallace Court, I’m afraid,” said Hu-

bert to his friend, when they went up into their comfortable rooms to dress.

“Nonsense, Temple, do not be so little; you ought to be too proud to say such petty things—Winterdyne is as fine a place as any my father has, except the Court, which he cannot afford half to keep up; and if we are dull with such a lake, such ponies, such dogs, and such pretty sisters, why, we deserve it, that’s all. Do, there’s a good fellow, be satisfied with being Temple of Winterdyne, and do not try to make us wonder why you are not the grand sultan.”

The next two days were appropriated to showing Lord John all that was to be seen of Winterdyne beauties in the present state of the weather; the next, if the frost held, was to be devoted to skating; and the next, the long talked-of dinner party and ball, to welcome Hubert home.

In the afternoon the boys returned from their ride and calls in high spirits, and began to make preparations for the skating. They were very busy; first a new strap was wanted; then a steel edge was broken; then the buckles were gone; first one thing, then another, kept them on the fidgets—they were anxious to have everything in sportsmanlike order, for all the people within reach had been invited to make a large gay party, and they wished to show off their Eton skill to astonish them. The night before it blew a rather warm

wind, and the gamekeeper shook his head and prophesied a thaw. There was no snow falling, but certainly the air felt damp and raw. The boys could not rest; every half-hour till bed-time they went out to see if there was any change, but no, all was the same; the very glass was stationary, the clouds hung heavy and lowering, and looked not unlikely to fall in rain, while the wind blew in gusts, as it often does before a wet night. They went to bed in despair, and at midnight the storm came down and wakened them, pattering like hailstones against the windows. After a while the violence abated, but the rain continued steadily till about six in the morning, when the clouds blew off, and it froze hard again. The colonel sent for the keeper before he was up.

“Will it be safe on the lake this morning, Lawrence?”

“No, sir, not to-day;—the ice is broken away from the side, and even if it freezes sharp till night, it won’t be over safe, then.”

“How vexed the lads will be, and all those people coming. I don’t know what to do with them.”

“Would you mind the young gentlemen going out with me after the wild ducks to-day, sir? There’s a flock, George tells me, down by the mere.”

“A capital thought,—they’ll be safe, Lawrence?”

"Oh yes, sir; I'll engage for Mr. Hubert; he was a pretty fair shot before he went to school, and he isn't likely to have forgotten it; and as for the young lord, he is as little like a boy as don't know how to handle a gun as ever I saw. Oh, they'll be right enough, sir."

"Well, let it be so—come up at eleven."

"Do not let them go near the lake, sir, in the mean time; I am sure the ice is not thick enough to bear."

When the colonel entered the breakfast-room the boys were already there; Hubert was in a very ill temper, cross with the weather, the people, his sisters, and every body.

"Well, no one is asked before twelve o'clock, and, if it continues to freeze, it will bear by then!"

"Lawrance says No," said his father; "and he has been all round."

"He is a regular croaker, father! I will go down directly after breakfast and see for myself."

"Not unless you give me a promise that on no pretence, or temptation, you will venture on the ice; I am sure it is not safe."

"Why? I could only get a ducking at the worst, and I believe it is as sound by this time as it was yesterday—Lawrance is always croaking."

"My dear Hubert," said his mother, "I beg of you not to attempt skating to-day, to oblige me."

"Why, mother? What visions of horror have possessed you?"

"None that I am aware of; but I am sure Lawrence would not have been so positive, had it been at all feasible for you to skate in safety."

"Safety! You'll have me a regular milk-sop!"

"I hope not, and I think there is little chance; but I have great fear of danger on the ice after such a thaw as last night; promise me, Hubert, not to go upon it."

"Indeed, mother, there is no cause for alarm!"

"Never mind Hubert, I think there is. Besides, your mother wishes it, that is enough; I hope it is not necessary to say anything more."

"No, I am sure it is not, sir; and really I think shooting to-day, and skating the first hard frost, is a better arrangement than only the skating, seeing we get two days' amusement instead of one—and now, till the keeper makes his appearance, I will help you, Miss Temple, to build the grotto at the end of the supper-room for to-morrow night," said Lord John.

In a very sulky temper Hubert went after breakfast to see his pony; the sun was shining, and the air felt sharp and brisk; a searching wind, as well as the frost, had dried up all the rain, and the lake, sprinkled with particles of frozen snow, glittered in the sunlight like a sheet of silver studded with diamonds; the trees too, with their

graceful branches, bent with the weight of ice jewels, bowed to its edge as to a mirror in admiration of their own brilliant and starry appendages. The whole scene was very enticing to a skater, and the disappointed boy, turning down by the pine-grove, met Lawrance, who was coming towards the house.

"I hope you are not going to try the ice, sir," said he; "all round the edges it is as thin as glass."

"I'm going to look at it; this frost ought to have made it thick enough."

"Well sir, but don't try it. I am sure it is very deceitful where the sleet lies, just below the grove, in the shelter."

"I can see, I dare say. My father is waiting for you at the kennel; if I'm not back by the time you want to start, send one of the men to the warren; I am going there directly."

By the time Lawrance and his master had finished an important conversation about the game, and the shocking increase of poaching, notwithstanding the terrors of traps and keepers, it was half-past eleven, and one or two of the guests had arrived. Fortunately, they were boys, and quite as glad of the promised duck-shooting, with the prospect of another day on the ice, as they would have been to skate then.

"But it's quite time you were off," said the colonel. "Where is Hubert?"

“Gone to the warren, sir.”

“Send James to bring him then; tell him we are all ready.”

After waiting some time, the boys became impatient, and set off to meet him; they had not left the lawn when they saw the messenger running breathlessly up the hill, and there came over Lawrence's mind a horrible sense of some dreadful calamity.

“Oh, sir!” cried James, “I cannot find master Hubert, and I am afraid——”

“Of what?—speak, man!” shouted the colonel.

“There is a breach in the ice just under the pine-trees.”

In a moment every one was running at full speed towards the lake; and when they reached it, the terrible truth of the man's surmise became apparent; a large gap was made in the ice, as if from the fall of some heavy body, and floating on the water in the aperture was Hubert's cap. The grove and hills resounded with their shouts, uttered in the forlorn hope that he might be in safety and would reply; but echo, waiting back, was the only answer. Till night set in, every exertion was used to discover the poor lost boy, but in vain; and they were on the point of relinquishing their task in despair, when under a ledge of ice, close by the place where he had at first fallen, they found the swollen and disfigured body: it was drawn to shore, and, covered carefully with the cloaks of the

searchers, was carried back in mournful silence to the house he had quitted in health and life so short a time before.

No entreaties nor authority could prevent Mrs. Temple from seeing the corpse of her idolized son ; and although she bore it with more fortitude than could have been expected, she never rallied after, but died in the year following, a broken-hearted and penitent mother ; for well she saw, when it was too late, that her own blameable indulgence and forgiveness of his disobedience had been the real cause of her boy's terrible death ; had he been curbed and taught to obey from his infancy, the easy lesson would have been early and effectually learned, and, in all human probability, Hubert Temple would have lived to close his mother's eyes.

Immediately after the funeral the family left Winterdyne ; the place was become odious to them, and except when the colonel died, and, pursuant to his parting wish, was brought there to lay his body by that of his unhappy boy, none of the Temples have ever returned.

“ Oh, mamma, what a dreadful end to poor Hubert ! ” said Fanny, with a deep sigh ; “ it was

not so very bad just to put his foot on that ice, was it?"

"God did not punish him for putting his foot on the ice, Fanny, but for disobeying his parents; he did it in defiance of their commands, and whether the forbidden thing was great or small, the sin was the same."

"Oh, dear! dear! I shall be quite frightened; please, mamma, do not order me very, very much, for fear I should be naughty and disobey you, and make God angry."

"My dear Fanny, it would be the very way to make you naughty, act wickedly, and make God angry, if I were to let you have your own way, which I suppose is what you mean by not ordering you much. How would you ever know right from wrong?"

"But if you should tell me to do a very, very difficult thing, and I cannot; oh, mamma, think how dreadful!"

"What, my dear! What is dreadful? My telling you to do a difficult thing, or you not being able to do it?"

"I don't know, mamma; both, I think."

"Well, Fanny, for your comfort, I am not likely to give you anything so very difficult to do; but even if I should, you must try to accomplish it; and I believe you will generally find that prompt obedience and perseverance bring a bless-

ing and prove us able to do many wonderful things. I never found when I was a child anything really impracticable that I was told to do, when I set to work immediately, without giving the black dog time to get on my shoulder, and tried with all my heart; depend upon it, my darling, it is our own will and temper which makes things easy or difficult. And now my tale is quite finished. I hope you will remember Hubert Temple whenever you are tempted to say "I cannot," or, "I do not like," or any other refractory or disobedient speech: if you do, and his sad fate comes to your memory as a warning, this evening will have been very profitably spent; but see, Fanny, Miss Norton holds up her watch, what does that mean?"

"Please, Miss Norton, just one atom of a minute; don't say I am to go this very instant, because if you do, I shall be obliged to run off to Susan directly, and I want to ask mamma a little question."

"Well, as a reward for your attention, you may have this atom, but it's a very short time, Fanny, scarcely so long as I have been speaking."

"Oh, Miss Norton, then you ought not to have taken it all for yourself. I don't think Clarice would have called that quite honest; but please, mamma, be quick; I want to know what became of Milly—did she continue always naughty, or grow up good and obedient?"

"I believe she altered greatly, Fanny: her mother's death was a lesson she never forgot; and I remember when I first saw her, delaying a minute to bring my mother something she had asked me for, and Mrs. Stevens (she was married then) seriously reprobated me, in, as I thought, a very severe manner; but after she was gone, and I complained of it to your grandmamma, she told me the story I have now told you, and asked me whether I did not think Mrs. Stevens had learned the value of implicit obedience in a hard school. 'It is not enough,' I recollect she said, 'to obey, it must be done at once, and without any further reason than that we are bid to do so;' and she was right."

"Thank you, mamma; now a sweet kiss,—have I been more than my time, Miss Norton?—mamma was rather long, but it was very good to hear, we hope you will consider that. Now good night Emily—every lady a kiss, and 'Adieu,' as Miss Bolton says, when she's very fine, in the holidays," and, with a hurried kiss to each, all the time she was chattering, Fanny ran out of the room to bed.

The next evening, when they met, Fanny placed a stool by her mother's chair, and smoothing her pinafore, and crossing her hands in a grave attitude of expectation, exclaimed—

"Now Miss Norton, it is your turn; I hope you are quite ready—quite perfect!"

"Mine will not be so interesting a tale as your mamma's, I fear, Fanny; and it is not my own, but one my mother wrote for my sisters when I was a little girl like you; I did not hear it read, but when I grew up it was given to me for the amusement and instruction of my pupils."

"Did your mamma write it out of her own head, Miss Norton?"

"Yes, Fanny."

"And is it not true, like my mamma's?"

"I believe not quite all, my love?"

"Oh, dear, what a pity! but never mind, it can't be helped—I dare say it will be interesting."

"Then I will begin."

"Stop a moment, please, Miss Norton. Was your mamma good—I mean good like you; did she talk about obedience, and patience, and those things?"

"She was a great deal better, my love, than I am, and she always talked of what you call obedience, and 'those things.'"

"Then please read the story; I know I shall like it; I was afraid it was nonsense, and I do not like nonsense," said the child, demurely.

"How long have you been so very grave and serious, Fanny?" said Grace, laughing; I thought I heard you chattering away about old Mother Hubbard in the nursery to-day."

“Was I? Oh, yes, I remember; but that was to my doll, Grace; it did very well for her.”

“She can’t understand sense, then, I suppose?”

“Of course not—what a funny idea! But please, Grace, don’t talk any more, try to wait till after Miss Norton has done her story.”

KATE HAMILTON.

“ Oh, mamma, what a dreadful flash, it almost blinded me!” cried Amy Hamilton, as a bright flash of lightning rent the dark clouds asunder.

The storm had overtaken them in the park, at some distance from home, and affected the natural timidity of the child. They had reached the shelter of a deer hovel, and, from under its protection, looked out on the tempest. It was an awful sight. The day was clear and calm when they left home for their walk, and they had stayed in the village till the black clouds gathering round, the chilly wind, true herald of the coming hurricane, the plaintive cry and low flight of the frightened birds, warned them to hurry homewards. They had only reached the brow of a hill in the park, when the heavy drops of rain began to fall, for Amy's terror impeded their progress materially, she clung to her mother, and cried bitterly, all reason seemed to have deserted her; she could listen to no voice but that of her own fears. With a sudden howl, as if some evil spirit had been unloosed, the wind swept over the earth in fury, bending the young trees to the ground, and twisting and lashing the boughs of the more stubborn ones, till the park was strewn with the wrecks whirled hither and thither

in its frantic sport. Then burst over the startled child peal after peal of those frightful thunder claps, which appeared to shake the earth she stood on to its centre. Then faster and faster came the terrible lightning, gleaming and glancing, like a fire-demon, through the trees, over the ground, everywhere setting the whole park in a blaze of light.

A sudden darkness, too, seemed to have fallen upon the world, only heightened by the lightning; and a cold white light glared upon the windows of their house in the distance. It was a perilous hour, and Amy might be forgiven for her alarm.

"Oh, mamma, mamma, we shall be killed, surely we shall," she cried; "do you not think so?"

"I hope and believe not, my darling; but our God is here now, as near and as powerful as he was when we set out in the sunshine this morning. We shall not die if it is not his will, and if it is, we should do so, even if we were at home, with a world to guard us."

"But mamma, it is so very dreadful; look, look, another flash!" and the child hid her face in her hands to shut out the glare, and screamed violently; while her younger sister, Kate, held their mother's hand, and, though greatly terrified, listened with a believing heart to her words, and, trusting the God she could not see, looked on the storm with great alarm, but greater faith.

Amy was a very delicate child, in earlier years subject to fits whenever strongly excited ; and Kate read in Mrs. Hamilton's face the dread lest her present state should cause a return of them ; and as the piercing shrieks rang through the air, she said, in her sweet soothing voice,

“ Oh, Amy, dearest, pray be quiet, you do so distress mamma ; do not fear, God is with us.”

But vain was every attempt to reason her into composure, for as she spoke a blaze more intense and vivid than ever, darting here and there, peeping into every corner, as if in angry search of some hidden secret, illuminating the darkest nook, excited Amy's fears almost to frenzy, and she shrieked incessantly.

“ Pray, mamma, take me away—do, do. Oh where is papa to take us home ; I am so ill, dear, dear mamma, pray send for him ;” and the child shivered in her arms.”

“ It is impossible, my dear Amy ; try to be patient, your fears make you ill, not the danger ; turn your face from the door, cover it with this shawl, and you will not see the lightning.”

Very great had been Mrs. Hamilton's efforts to control the nervous terror which was almost constitutional in Amy ; for, independently of the sin of such ungoverned passions, it affected the child's health ; till now she had hoped her constant exer-

tions had been successful ; but as she felt the poor child's trembling frame, and saw her blanched and agonized features, she discovered that much was yet to be done.

The hurricane continued with unabated violence, and, after a keener flash than before, Amy fell back upon her mother, her eyes closed, and her lips turned pale.

“ I shall die, mamma, if you do not take me home.”

“ Then I must leave you, Amy, to bring assistance. Can you stay here alone ? ”

“ I will go, mamma,” said Kate; “ I am not afraid. God is out in the park, as well as here, and he will not let the lightning kill me—I will go.”

“ You are right, Kate, I would go myself if I could leave Amy, and I believe you are in no greater danger there than here ; at any rate the Father you trust is with you, so go, my darling, fear not, he will protect you—but kiss me first.”

“ I will not be long—cheer up, Amy ; ” and the brave child passed from the shelter into the furious storm, turned round, after going a little way, to kiss her hand to her mother, for the beautiful instinct of love taught her to hide the fear trembling at her heart, lest that dear mother should be alarmed, and then with a gay semblance of courage ran across the open ground.

“ Oh, thou merciful Father, who hast inspired

her with faith, watch over her," murmured Mrs. Hamilton, with the tears falling fast from the eyes which she strained to follow her.

Drenched to the skin, her long fair ringlets straight and wet, her face pale and excited, Kate bounded up the hall steps. Several times she had fancied herself enveloped in the lightning, and her little heart had almost yielded to the fear; but she held on her way as steadily as before, firm in her reliance upon the Providence she loved, and eager to relieve her mother and Amy. First she intended to go to the stables, and tell the groom to get a carriage ready, while she ran on to her father, but she remembered having heard her mother say long before, that some horses would not move in a thunder-storm; "and," thought the wise child, "if the one he puts into the carriage should be so, it will only hinder instead of forwarding papa, because it must be unharnessed; I had better go first to him."

"You have done very prudently, my brave child," said her father, when she told him; "I have but one horse who would stir in such a storm, and he is the last they would have chosen—old blind Jack. Go into the nursery, darling, have your clothes changed, and I will take a carriage directly to your mamma and Amy."

When Mr. Hamilton reached the hovel he found Amy senseless in the arms of his wife; and

for many hours, long after the sky was cloudless, and the air fresh and cool, she lay insensible to their beauty upon the bed, from which it seemed doubtful whether she would ever rise, and to which she was confined several weary weeks, in suffering and self-reproach.

“And now, my dear Fanny,” interposed Miss Norton, “you see that Kate, though only eleven years old, had been taught to think, and act upon judgment instead of impulse.”

One day, when Amy had nearly recovered, she and Kate, with Alice and Maude, their elder and younger sisters, sat around a bright fire in their mother’s dressing-room; for, although only the second week of a fine September, Amy was still sufficiently an invalid to render a warm corner and an easy chair requisite.

The sisters were chatting merrily over their work, and Mrs. Hamilton continued writing letters at the table, every now and then joining in their conversation.

“How much we shall enjoy it! What a treat it will be, thanks to you, mamma!” said Alice, the eldest, a girl of fifteen, continuing the subject they had been discussing.”

“I hope so, my dear; and I trust my not being of the party will not decrease your pleasure.”

"Not of the party—oh, mamma, why?" exclaimed all the group.

"Because I have promised my seat in the carriage to poor Julia Severn, she so seldom has any enjoyment; and with your papa and aunt you will be quite safe, so I shall stay at home with Amy."

"Julia Severn!" said Alice wonderingly.

"Julia Severn, a cripple! What can she want to go for?" said Maude, angrily.

"Julia Severn, poor girl, how glad I am; and how good of you, mamma; still I wish you could manage to go too, it won't be half so nice without you," cried Kate.

"Amy and I shall expect to be quite as much amused by hearing your account when you return, so you must pay particular attention to every thing for our benefit."

"Oh, that I will! I can take care of Julia, and down those smooth grassy walks by Tarn hill side she can easily walk; and when she's tired I will stay by her. I hope it will not be dull for her, but she is so used to being alone."

"You are always good-natured, Kate, but I'm afraid your kindness will destroy your own pleasure; it is not a very agreeable occupation sitting with a poor deformed cripple, when every one else is wandering about," said Alice.

"Oh, but I dare say it is, better than you think, Ally, dear; and I know you'd stay with her your-

self, sooner than she should feel desolate among us," replied Kate.

"I wish I could go," said Amy, fretfully; "I am sure I am well enough, only Mr. Manners likes to keep me here."

"Wait a little longer, Amy, and papa will take us to the next meeting in the spring; be patient, and do all Mr. Manners orders you, and you will soon be as well as ever."

"I cannot be patient; it is very easy for you to say, 'Be patient,' Alice, when you can go here and there, and enjoy every thing; but it is too much to expect me to like sitting at home, while you are all going to this archery meeting," said Amy, while her voice sounded husky and choking.

"No, of course you don't like it; who would? But it's your own fault, Amy, for being such a coward in that storm; why were you frightened, more than Kate? She did not faint, and she is a year younger than you," said Maude.

"I could not help it, Maude, and it is very unkind of you to speak so," replied Amy, whose tears now fell fast; "and I am not a coward, at least not more than you, for you cried yesterday, when papa's fishhook caught your finger; and a thunder storm is worse than a prick at any rate."

"No, that it is not; pain *must* be worse than *fright*; and, besides, I only cried the least bit in the world when papa pulled it out, and he said it

was very bad ; it was a barbed hook, not a common one. I did not make myself ill for months."

" Thunder storm, *versus* fishhook," said Alice, laughing ; " a very important case indeed."

" But, Alice," said Amy, crying, " don't you really think—"

" Now, Alice," interrupted Maude, sneeringly, " which is the worst—to frighten yourself into fits at a clap of thunder, or to cry two minutes when a jagged fishhook is pulled out of your finger ?"

" Not a clap of thunder, Ally, but a horrible storm," eagerly interposed Amy.

" Stay, young ladies, I must have time to think. A very important case is brought before me, and I cannot be hurried ; let the point be weighed with becoming consideration. I have to decide whether crying in a deer hovel, or weeping by a fishpond, is the most dignified position ? A difficult question, ladies—a very difficult question. Let me see."

" Now, Alice, you are only laughing at me," sobbed Amy.

" The wisest thing she can do, I think ; for you are either very silly children and deserve to be laughed at, or very wicked ones, trying to tease each other, and that I do not like to believe."

" But, mamma, Maude is so unkind—and—and I am no more of a coward than she is ; and I do not like to sit at home when they are all going."

“I have no doubt it is a very mortifying thing, Amy, that you should be obliged to remain at home, while your sisters are enjoying a merry day at the archery meeting; but you must remember that it has been caused, as well as the four past months of pain and weakness, by that want of self-control, against which I have so often warned you. No one, my dear child, can be either good, or wise, or useful, in this world, without the constant exercise of that great virtue.”

“There, Ally, you see *mamma* thinks I am wiser than Amy,” whispered Mande.

“No, Maude, I do not; quite the contrary; for, if you had possessed either the virtue, or the love for your sister I hoped you felt, you would not have aggravated her feelings of annoyance by calling her coward, and by uttering what you have just now said.”

“Mamma, I spoke without thinking,” said Maude, ashamed.

“Yes, my dear little girl, but the unkind words you uttered, though they might have arisen in your mind, would never have been spoken, if your heart and voice had been under proper control. The hasty blow which one man strikes to kill another in his fury—the evil word, scarcely ever forgotten, making enmity where all should be peace—are equally the result of a want of self-control. The greatest sin, as well as the least, springs from that one baneful root.”

"But surely, mamma, there must be a great difference between the wrong done in Amy making herself ill, and causing you such a deal of sorrow, and my only speaking a hasty word?"

"Not a particle, Maude; indeed, I am not quite sure if what you call a hasty word is not the worst, for what seed can be so evil as that which sows discord between sisters."

At this moment a knock was heard at the door, and Julia Severn tottered in.

"I have brought a note from mamma," she said, giving one to Mrs. Hamilton.

"Brought it yourself, Julia? Why, how did you come?" asked Alice, in surprise.

"Mamma was driving into town, and she left me at the Lodge as she passed."

"And have you walked? Oh, poor Julia," said Alice, in a voice of indignation.

"Yes, I am very tired; but I did not mind it, because I was coming here; you know I like to come here."

"I am glad to hear it, love, for then you shall stay all day, and you will be ready to go with the party to-morrow. I wrote yesterday to ask Lady Severn's permission, and she has kindly given it in this note."

"Oh, what a delight! I shall be free one whole day from those horrid children."

"Horrid children! What children—not your brothers?" said Amy.

"My dear Amy, do not ask questions; and, Julia, love, pray never use such thoughtless words again. Now, girls, ring for luncheon, and do your best to give your visitor a merry day, only don't tire her for to-morrow," said Mrs. Hamilton, gathering up her letters, and leaving the room.

"Oh, Alice, what an angel your mother is!" exclaimed Julia, vehemently; "if ever one brightened this miserable world, it is she. Tire me! I wonder who ever thought of the wretched cripple before! Not any one at my home now. Once, long ago, I had such kind words spoken to me; but I have never heard them since *she* died—my own—own mother. Oh, why did I not die with her?" and the over-tired and excited child leaned upon the table, and cried bitterly.

"Do not cry, Julia," said Kate, "mamma is very kind; but so is yours too."

"Yes, to Charles and Henry, her own tiresome and cruel sons; but to me she is barbarous. She never beats me, or starves me, or shuts me up in dark rooms; but she lets those rough, savage boys torment and worry me, often when my poor head aches, and I tremble with fear; and then she laughs and bids me run away, when she knows I cannot, and she calls me fine lady, when my eyes

close with pain, and I cannot raise my head, and says I am useless and idle. Oh, I wish that I could die."

" You are fatigued, Julia, or you would not say such unkind things of your mamma," replied Alice, soothingly.

" Mamma! She is *not* mamma. For shame of me for ever calling her so! She is no more like *my* gentle, beautiful mamma, than I am like to yours. She hates me, I know she does, and I know why. She wants to kill me, but I won't die; I will bear up against it all, and spite her at last!" exclaimed Julia, passionately.

" Wants to kill you! What dreadful fancies you have, Julia. I am sure you are ill—I will call mamma."

" No, do not, Alice; I cannot bear her to see me as I feel now. But I am always so, you know, when I speak of Lady Severn; do not you know why I am sure she wishes me to die? While I live, three parts of all my father's property must be mine, and I—the miserable cripple!—am an heiress; while her bold, rude, brutal boys will only have the rest between them. Oh, how I shall triumph then; thanks to old Sarah, I know it, and I treasure up all the cruel words and taunts I hear now, to pay them bitterly off, when I am mistress;" and her large eyes gleamed with vengeance.

" Poor, poor Julia, how I pity you," said Kate,

earnestly, "for all those wicked thoughts. I am sure Alice is right; you are not well, and do not know what you say. Triumph over your brothers! Oh, what a horrible idea!"

"You do not know what it is, Kate; it sounds horrible and wicked to you, and if you were to feel so in your happy home, it would be both. But for me—tortured and insulted—I have no thought but of that day of revenge. It keeps me up—without it I should die—and it is not one thing only but everything. Yesterday—oh that dreadful yesterday! I shall never—never forget it, till the misery she made me feel has been ten times repaid. Because Marmot, *my* mother's dear old dog, the only living thing I have left of hers that loves me and I love, snarled at Charles when he kicked him with his savage foot, she ordered him to be killed; but Sarah interfered, and told her that, if she did, she would leave the house directly, and so would Morris the butler; and Lady Severn dared not do as she intended then, because she knew papa would be angry at their leaving, but she has poisoned his mind, for to-day he said, that as Marmot was growing old and vicious, he must be tied up in the stable, and not allowed to come into the house again. I cried, and begged, and prayed, but he was cross, and bid me be silent, or the dog should be killed; and Charles laughed, and said he was only good for his skin. And so my poor

dog—that I love like a friend—my companion, my mother's pet, has been taken away by that cruel woman. Still, never mind, as Sarah says, she can't cheat me of my birthright; and, if she does not kill me quite, I shall have a glorious reckoning some day."

As she loudly spoke these words, Mrs. Hamilton entered, and, hearing the last, put an end to the conversation by taking her into the next room, while the sisters were left together to wonder at the difference between their happy home and Julia's.

The history of Julia Severn was a very sad one. Her mother, a beautiful young woman, whose only child she was, died, when she was four years old, the lingering melancholy death of consumption; and for the two last years of her life, when she was visibly passing from this world to her rest, she seldom allowed her poor little deformed child to be taken from her sight, but directed all her care to soothe the sense of affliction, to which, even at that early age, she was keenly alive. Julia had not been always a cripple, but from some unexplained cause, whether a fall never confessed by her nurse, or some natural defect, at the time she was a year old, she began to pine and sicken; and shortly after, an inability to exert herself, constant pain and gradual wasting away, told too plainly

that some evil was at work. The first medical and surgical advice failed to discover the hidden source of suffering, and the poor child grew slowly up, in a pitiable state of deformity. While her mother lived, every device that could ease or aid her faltering steps and shrunken body comforted and assisted her, and any bright glare of light, or loud noise, that might have caused uneasiness to her nervous frame, was completely avoided.

Poor Lady Severn died in the firm belief that the large fortune which must descend to her child would effectually protect her from unkindness: but this future wealth was one great cause of the misery Julia now endured; her temper, naturally irritable, and aggravated by continual pain, never checked in her mother's life, through fear lest opposition should increase her illness, had arrived at such an extreme of waywardness and passion, that a wiser and more gentle person than her stepmother would have found it difficult to manage her; nothing but a loving and Christian spirit, joined to a sincere regard for the violent and wilful child, could have worked actively for her good; and, most unfortunately, Lady Severn possessed neither of these requisites.

She was not cruelly or unkindly disposed, and had at first really tried to make Julia happy; but, unaccustomed to see or deal with bodily ailment or indulged humour, she was quickly repulsed in

her rather awkward efforts by the child's ungracious manner; and, unfortunately, when she came first to see her, she was in one of those frequent paroxysms of agony caused by her still unabated grief and the carelessness of those around her. In her imagination and excited mind was a vivid picture of her gentle and peaceful mother, with her low voice and holy smile; and her whole body aching, every pulse throbbing, and her beating head longing for quiet, the appearance of a gay young bride, with a very unmusical voice and noisy manners, only added to her wretchedness, and produced a very unfavourable impression. The day was intensely hot, unrelieved by a single breeze, and Julia lay upon a soft couch, that on which her mother had died, in a room every window of which was thrown open, and shadowed with green outside blinds, making a pleasant darkness for her aching and burning eyes; but just below, jarring upon her beating brain, was the noise and trampling of horses and carriages—the arrival of her new mamma. She held her head firmly with her trembling hands to still its palpitation; and quite forgetting not only that Lady Severn was ignorant of her illness, and could not prevent the harsh grating of the carriage-wheels upon the gravel, she was not prepared to kiss or welcome her when the door was boisterously thrown open, and the merry party entered.

“ Why, my pretty one, how is this ? ” said the bride ; “ I thought I should have met you dancing on the lawn, in the gay new frock papa sent you.”

“ I am not pretty, and I never dance,” said the child, angrily ; “ I am a cripple.”

“ Oh, yes, I forgot ; but never mind, next time I come to see you I will bring some nice new toys, and a merry little playfellow. You will like that, Julia, will you not ? ”

The child made no answer, but her nurse did.

“ Miss Julia cannot bear the noise of play, my lady, she has never been used to it.”

“ Oh, that is all nonsense, nurse ! all children ought to love play. I know I did ; ” and she laughed gaily.

“ Oh, Lucy ! Lucy ! take her away—my poor head will break, indeed it will ! ” said the child.

“ I do not wonder at it ; this suffocating day, and all these blinds down, is quite enough to give any body a head-ache. The sun is on the other side of the house, so you only shut out the little air there is. I will draw them up, and pray let the child be kept in a lighter room, with plenty of playmates, as many as she likes. I cannot endure such gloomy fancies ; we shall have her melancholy ; ” said Lady Severn, and she went to the windows, and with no gentle hand pulled up the Venetian blinds. She had a great love of managing and power, and in the large family, of which she was the eldest, no

time had been spent by her over-tasked governess to teach her Mrs. Hamilton's favourite virtue.

Tears of pain poured from Julia's heated eyes as the sudden glare of light burst upon them, and she cried out, in impatient torture,—

“ Mamma! my own mamma! why do you not come back? they are killing me.”

“ Hush, love!” said a sweet low voice beside her, and a cool soft hand was laid upon her brow (it was that of Mrs. Hamilton); “ bear the pain a minute, it will soon be better.”

The agony of the tone and words caused Lady Severn to turn round; she dropped the blind-string, and came forward.

“ What a strange child she is; I am afraid she has been sadly spoiled.

“ I think not; she suffers greatly, and this seems,” said Mrs. Hamilton, “ to be one of her worst days. Let us leave her alone, for silence will be her best medicine, and to-morrow, perhaps, she will be ~~able~~ to bid you welcome—will you not, Julia?”

“ No, never!—I do not like cruel people, and I want to be by myself,” replied Julia.

“ She is very ill-tempered, I think,” said Lady Severn angrily; “ I must speak to her papa; she has been greatly mismanaged.”

Suffering as she was, at these words reflecting upon her dear, dead mother, Julia started up; her large blue eyes gleaming with passion, her cheeks

pale, her long thin fingers clenched, and violent words were pouring forth, when Mrs. Hamilton took her in her arms, and said firmly,—

“ Julia, I will not allow this, I fear you are indeed growing ill-tempered; lie down, and be silent.”

Astonished and silenced, the child obeyed, and the party left the room.

Longer acquaintance between them only increased the evil, and the affection that gentler manners and a more patient spirit would have won from her stepmother Julia wholly lost.

Added too to the annoyance of her ungracious words and violent hatred, Lady Severn saw in Julia the bar to her own boys inheriting their father's wealth, and, from the moment she became possessed of this knowledge, her step-daughter's life was indeed a wretched one.

Julia could not retaliate in their own way upon the strong boys, who, as they grew up unchecked by their mother, tormented and tortured her; but she learned the hateful power of bitter taunting words, and surely never in one home, the abode of brothers and sisters, were such unholy passions and such evil triumph manifested.

An object of great solicitude and pity was this misguided child to Mrs. Hamilton, and most anxiously did she take every opportunity that was afforded, of sowing in her heart those principles of

Christian charity and forbearance, which she, more than most, so much needed to help her on her thorny and difficult way; and in this good work Kate, though much younger than Julia, was her able and faithful assistant, for from no one else would she take such fearless reproofs and plain stern truths as from her true-hearted playfellow. God works by small instruments sometimes, and it seemed as if he had selected the modest child of eleven years old to lead a wandering fellow-creature back to her true home.

“Now for bows and arrows, and bracelets and silver doves, and all sorts of glee,” said Kate, dancing about with delight as the carriage drew up to the door; “it does not rain, Ally, you see; you are no true prophetess, and are never to be believed, from this time forth, for ever and a day. You dear good kind papa, how I do love you,” continued the merry child, clapping her hands.

“Why, Kate, I never saw you in such ecstasies before; I begin to think you have some secret intention of winning the silver arrow,” said her father.

“Ah, you will see! you will see! I’ve had an interview with my fairy patroness; last night, on the edge of a moonbeam, just the very tip, she glided before me, and wonderful things she has promised

—among the rest a bright day, not a cloud as big as a bee, not an ‘Oh dear me! another turnpike,’ from any body, (she looked slyly at her papa, whose particular horror turnpikes were,) not a ‘Come back, children, it is not lady-like to run,’ from our important eldest sister, and numberless other delightful promises.”

“ You lawless little thing,” said Alice, laughing, “ I’ve a great mind not to chaperon such a rebel.”

“ Oh, marvellous fairy queen, listen to Alice!” said the happy child, “ and give her two pinches for her disobedience: do not turn her into a laurel-tree till we come back; but change her pretty pink bonnet into a deep red, and make her, if you can, look ugly, just for to-day.”

“ No, fairy lady, listen to me; don’t let any body be frightful but me—one ugly cripple is enough in a party; another would scare even the silver doves,” said poor Julia Severn.

“ Very well, Julia, just as you please; as many ugly *people* as my dear fairy likes, but not one ugly *temper*, or I will neither sit, stand, walk, talk, or make myself charming all day; one discontented word, in disobedience to my patroness’s command, that we should all be merry, and I will whisk round nine times under the old holly-tree, or use some other charm, and you will all be turned into wasps: so now, as I have informed you of my will and pleasure, please papa get on the box, and

give those animals a gentle flogging, or, like the old woman's piggy wiggy that Maude used to talk about, 'we shall be here all day.' "

" Illustrious protégée of the Fairy Queen, your behests shall be instantly obeyed," said her papa; and in ten minutes they had passed the lodge gates.

" Oh, how this sun hurts my eyes," said Maude. " I wish I had a parasol, I shall be scorched."

" Not more than every body else, Maude; and, if you remember, I advised you to bring one."

" Oh, yes, you are always very clever, Alice! but it poured with rain two days ago, and the sun was not out at all yesterday, so how could I expect it would be hot to-day."

" Well, as you could not expect it, did not provide against it, and have no means of escaping it, the wisest plan is to put up with it."

" But I cannot, it is just in my face."

" So it is," said Alice, gravely; " I don't know what is to be done, unless Kate's fairy could fly up with an umbrella."

" How silly you are, Alice; what nonsense you talk," replied Maude, pettishly; " it is not fair making me bear this burning sun."

" No more it is; but, unfortunately, as we are without the power to remove him, suppose we make an appeal to his good nature?"

" Oh, the very thing," said Julia, laughing; " let the fairy's friend address him—now Kate."

"I am almost frightened ; it is quite awful to talk to such a great thing—I cannot look at him. Will he think it rude if I do not, and frizzle me up, Alice?"

"I don't know—try."

"Oh, good, great, bright sun, we have in this carriage a very pretty, sweet-tempered little lady, who has forgotten her parasol (do not laugh, Alice, it is not respectful) ; the warm smiles that you send to dry up the fields and walks we are going to are too keen for her, so she sends a humble petition by me, that you would shut up that one of your great warm eyes which shines upon her and her paths to-day, leaving them nice and wet and cool, and not stare into her face so rudely ; only, dear good sun, as we want to run about, and play by the hill side, do not shut up the other ; but, as we are very willing and thankful to see your dear, kind eye here, please let it warm and dry all those places, which if you are angry, and go behind a black curtain, will be left in a disastrous state, for our new white frocks ; we know that we cannot have convenience without a wee bit of inconvenience, and we are grateful to have so little.—Any thing more, Maude ? I think I 've made a very touching appeal ; nevertheless, I will go on if you command me."

"Nonsense, Kate, you love to hear yourself talk ; Charles Severn said so last week, and I 'm sure he 's right."

"Charles is ——" exclaimed Julia.

"Quite right; I *do* love to hear myself talk, dearly, ever so dearly," said Kate, laughing.

"I have hit upon a better plan for poor Maude than your's Alice, for I think the 'great eyes' are all unmoved by Kate's pathetics; pop yourself under the seat, lassie, and hide those very unbecoming tears, you do not know how ugly you look," said Mr. Hamilton, turning round from the box where he was driving; "positively as bad as that queer old dame in the picture, when she had killed the goose with the golden eggs."

"It was a boy, papa, not an old woman—dear, how incorrect; you ought to be more careful when you quote such ancient and important authority," said Kate.

Maude made no reply to her father's good-humoured joke, but sat crying in the corner, till her usually pretty face was swollen, and as unlike that of a good and happy child, on her way to a day of pleasure, as you can well imagine.

Miss Norton for a moment interrupted the story, and said to Fanny, "If pretty little ladies could only see how ugly they are when their eyes are red, cheeks puffed, lips swollen, and shoulders stuck up, holding a crumpled and damp pinafore in a shaky hand, I really think, Fanny, it would be an effectual cure. I once had a pupil, long before I knew you, who was

a very lovely little thing when she was good and merry ; but when she was sulky, sobbing, and naughty, she looked like nothing on earth so much as a great dirty wax doll after a few minutes' warming at an uncomfortable fire.

In a short time the road on which they were driving became thronged with the carriages of their neighbours and friends going to the archery meeting ; and Kate's delight knew no bounds, as with many a merry greeting her papa drove in and out when the vehicles were thick, passing and dashing by them in good style.

They were all in high glee ; and not a little proud was Mr. Hamilton of his children. In the back of the carriage sat Alice, looking as pretty as a very becoming pale pink bonnet (which Kate's fairy had admired too much to meddle with) and a sweet temper could make her, smiling gaily as she recognised the faces round ; Julia beside her, her full blue eyes lighted up with pleasure, and as little like the miserable and unhappy cripple of Severn Park as possible ; opposite were Maude and Kate, the latter radiant with excessive delight ; she could scarcely refrain from shouting in her glee, when her papa cut cleverly in between two contending phætons, and shot by them both, then galloped beside Sir Grey Howell's barouche, while the children in it talked eagerly to the Hamiltons, and then with a true coachman-like jerk of the

elbow passed the mettled animals of Sir Grey like lightning.

" Halloa, Maude, my little wife, what is the matter with you ?" called out one of the Howells, as he strove to keep up on his pony with the rapid pace Mr. Hamilton was going ; " your face looks like a particularly amiable thunder-storm."

" And what do I look like ?" said Kate, trying to divert his attention ; " but I beg you will be careful, for your similes are not particularly felicitous to-day, and I am just now no less a personage than the Fairy of the Flying Steeds : so go away, rash mortal, I command you."

" Bravo, Kate !—I will obey your small majesty, by cantering past your flying steeds," said Frank Howell, laughing.

" Now do if you can—if you dare ! Papa, don't let him—go on, go on, papa—gallop by Sancho and Burgundy at speed ! What impertinence ! Why, they'd beat you at a trot," said Kate, starting up.

" Don't be too sure, royal lady," said Frank, striking his spirited Arabian pony sharply with his whip, for Mr. Hamilton's horses held him at work to keep up with them : " but, however, do not be uneasy ; I will not try."

" You are beaten," said Kate, clapping her hands, as, pulling at their task, the high-bred animals her

father drove left Frank far behind, "we are first, I am so glad—nobody has passed us.

"It is delightful!" exclaimed Julia. Elated with the speed at which she was travelling, the clear, light air, the gay scene around, and Kate's infectious merriment, she laughed as playfully as the giddiest of the party.

"I do think I never was so happy in my life, Frank," said Kate, as he joined them on the ground, "I feel as if I could jump out of my skin."

"Now, do not, Kate, only consider the consequences; though the novelty would be some excuse."

"The consequences—hang the consequences, if Kate Hamilton wants any thing," said Lewis Annesly, a bold, ungentlemanly boy, an acquaintance of Frank's, coming up to them.

"Kate is very well off at present, I believe, Annesly," replied Frank, coolly.

"Ah, so you say, let her speak for herself—but how on earth came you here?" he continued, turning to Julia—"what pleasure in the world can a place like this give to you?"

"Not quite so much as saying rude things gives to you, Lewis," replied Julia, her face crimsoning.

"You are witty to-day, Miss Julia; but, as to rude things, 'people who live in glass-houses,' you know—"

"You asked me just now if I wanted any thing,"

said Kate, indignantly, as she saw Julia tremble while the rough boy spoke, "and I told you no: but I was wrong—I do want one thing very much, and only you can give it to me—will you?"

"It depends on what it is—what is it?"

"Leave to say, good morning;" and, putting her arm in Julia's, she turned away, and joined her father and Alice.

"Oh, if God is merciful, as you say he is, Kate, why was I born to be so miserable?" murmured Julia, as she walked on with large tears rolling down her cheeks.

"To do some great work while you live, that none but you *can* do, Julia, and, when you have accomplished it, to join your mother in heaven."

"Oh, I shall be a beautiful angel, certainly," sneered Julia.

"I do not know about beauty, but I never read any thing of the loveliness of Lazarus, rather the contrary; and yet we are told he was an angel."

"Yes, but he had a beautiful soul—and I have neither a beautiful body, nor soul; I wish I had not come here to-day—I have no business in such gay places."

"Why not, Julia?"

"Only the happy and the healthy should——"

"Come out, do you mean, Julia? Bless me, what a good thing it is you have not the management of matters—what an empty world we should

have out of doors—a human face would be nearly as scarce as a snow-balling in June; for what with head-aches, and finger-aches, and temper-aches, every body would be in prison; Julia, when I have a small young world of my own to manage, I shall not set you at the head of affairs—but look, there is Emma and Rose Howell beckoning us to go to them."

"Oh, Kate," said Rose, "we have such a nice party on the other side of the hill, under the beech-trees; and we are going to have such a beautiful game; there's Annie Pardoe, and Ellen Sanders, and Elizabeth Grant, and six or seven more, and we are waiting for you, we shall have such fun."

"Oh, how pleasant, I am longing for a romp!"

The spot chosen by the children was a small round hill, shaded by a grove of beech-trees, which afforded them a pleasant shade from the still warm rays of the sun; they had industriously carried up several large stones to form thrones and seats, so that, at a little distance, the whole scene might have passed well for one in fairy land; the graceful, active children, in their white frocks and dancing ringlets, were no bad representatives of the "good people." A shout of joy was set up by them all, when Kate, a general favourite, joined them; and "Kate, look at this;" "Kitty, sit on this stone, I brought it on purpose;" "Kathleen, jewel, (from a

merry Irish maid,) mavourneen, come here, with your sunshiny face, that looks, among ours, like a star on the mountains," was heard on all sides. Oh, how universal is the magic of a sweet temper and Christian spirit!—for a long time their play went on merrily, and Kate, with her readiness to give up to others, her prompt invention, and gay replies, was queen of the revels. Seldom before had she been so thoroughly happy, for hers was a really sociable spirit, enjoying to the full every sort of amusement; but just as she had been duly enthroned as judge of some mimic trial, and was preparing to perform her part with dignity, she saw that over Julia's eyes had come the heavy painful appearance betokening one of her agonizing head-aches. In a moment, resigning her own pleasure for the sake of her friend, she started up, and cried—

" Let Annie be judge; she is as idle to-day as the birds at night."

" No, no, Kate, she is not half so funny as you are," exclaimed her companions.

" I have exhausted all my wit, and frowned till my forehead will never get straight again, let me be still, to manufacture a fresh stock—I will not yield to Annie's laziness; come, my lord, take your seat."

In vain they all protested and entreated, Kate was firm; and, waiting till she had set them gaily

to work, she went up to Julia—"Come, Julia, let us slip away, they will not miss us now, and you can have a nice rest in the little tent, before any body comes there; then you will be fit for another game when you awake; the carriages are close by, and I can bring you stores of cushions and pillows."

"And you, Kate?"

"Oh, I shall have plenty to do, never fear. I shall be glad of a rest too; first, I have to think of quantities of nonsense for after luncheon, when we go back; then I have to imagine myself a heroine, and consider how I ought to act under the circumstances; then—oh then, when all that is settled, I shall have something else to do."

"Oh, Kate, how I wish I was like you—you have given up the play you love, and all your companions, to come and nurse the miserable cripple whom no one else cares for."

"You are wrong, Julia, dear; we all care for you, and mamma loves you—you need never be miserable, if you would only learn to bear patiently the affliction of God's hand, and love all people, as all people would love you."

"You think so because you are good, and straight, and pretty, and—"

"That will quite do, Julia; perfections enough at once, but just let us examine my right to claim them. Good I am *not*, for I often do what I am ashamed of afterwards. Straight I am yet, but a

fall from my pony, or a toss out of a carriage, might soon destroy that ; pretty I have not quite made up my mind about, but my own private opinion is, that on *that* point you are right : it might be painful to ask other people ; but then I shall not, you know, so I run no risk of having my sensitive feelings hurt."

"Kate, how is it that every body loves you ?—even I love you."

"I know you do, and I will tell you why. Mamma and my uncle taught me long ago, (when I first began to speak, I believe,) that if I wished to be happy I must think always before I spoke or acted, and then I should never do or say an unkind thing ; and they bid me remember that we are all sisters in this world, children of the same dear Father, travelling, some in painful, some in pleasant paths, but all to the same *Home*, and therefore we are pledged by his love, and his gracious Son's, our own kind friend and comforter, to help, and cheer, and forgive each other ; I was very thankful to know this, and if people love me it is because they have learned it too."

"I often think when I am with you that I will try and do as you do, and be good ; but when I get home, with no one to help me to keep my good resolution, and am insulted for the misfortune that ought to be my shield, and jeered at and teased, when I am ill, by those cruel boys, and never

hear a kind word, I get hard and bitter again ; often, Kate, I could fall at people's feet, and kiss them for a loving word, or a friendly smile ; but, alas ! I never hear it."

" More the pity for them, and for you, Julia, dear, and very difficult is the task to learn to love and bear patiently. There is no credit to me for what little good I do, for every body is kind to me ; but, Julia, mamma says that God never sets us a hard task, if we have not power to do it, and the more difficult it looks the more should we be certain that we have some hidden power of performing it that waits to be tried. You know he is Our Father, and he would not bid us do his will if he knew it was impossible. If you, with your bad health and provoking brothers, strive to be patient and humble, for his dear Son's sake, no one will stand higher in his love ; and be you sure that, the greater the trial he gives you, the more strength he will send with it, if you ask. I heard my uncle say all this to poor Mrs. Bryan last week, when her son was killed ; and I am sure, if he were here now, he would say the same to you."

" But to be laughed at for the affliction I cannot help ; oh, Kate, you do not know how hard it is to bear."

" So have all cruel things been, from the time the wicked soldiers scoffed at our Saviour ; but he bore it, Julia, and even blessed the evil men who

mocked him: try to imitate Him, and if your brothers do not alter for shame, no matter, bear on, God sees and hears, and the bright heaven is coming, a rest for the weary." As she said this, Kate's sweet eyes were bright with trust; Julia looked at her with admiration, and whispered, as if to herself.

"I will try, if —"

"No ifs, Julia, dear; there never was one good for anything in this world; it is a nasty, cowardly word, only fit to be hunted out of the dictionary, and pinched to death. Now we have talked long enough, think of it, and go to sleep."

"Perhaps, Fanny," said Miss Norton, "you think that Kate was over-clever for her age, and talked more wisely than any of your young companions do; but you must remember, my love, that from the time she could speak her mother had constantly taught her the mighty works and love of God. And, besides, she was the niece of a good and pious uncle, at whose rectory she spent many weeks in each year, his companion and pupil: so, though naturally as play-loving and mirthful a child as you, Fanny, and gayest of the gay in all hours of recreation, her heart and memory were bountifully stored with holy thoughts and rich knowledge, and, though no one talked giddier nonsense than she did when with her playmates, few even at a more advanced age were better fitted with a humble and loving heart to speak the words she had heard

from infancy ; the high and glorious theme seemed to give her eloquence."

Contrary to her expectations, (continued Miss Norton's narrative,) rest brought no relief to poor Julia ; and when she awoke and saw Kate sitting by her, making all sorts of ridiculous figures upon an odd piece of paper she had found in her pocket, her heavy eyes, deeply circled with black, told that the pain was not relieved.

" I am no better, Kate," she said in a low, weak voice ; " and you have been sitting here all this time for nothing."

" Well, never mind, it is ten times worse for you than for me ; be quiet and shut your eyes, papa came in a few minutes since, and said he would manage that they should do without this tent ; there are not so many people as they expected, and they can spare it very well. You will not be disturbed ; so lie still, like a good child, while I finish this funny Paul Pry for Alice, and presently they will send us some luncheon. Papa says we need not be afraid, for absentees, when they *are* remembered, stand the best chance. I dare say we shall find that they will send enough for a small family of cormorants."

" Dear Kate," murmured Julia, as the pillows were tenderly arranged for her ; but the pain she suffered was so intense, that she could say no more, and, kissing the gentle hand which parted her thick

hair, that the cool wind might fan her temples, she closed her eyes in peace, for the softening sense of love was busy at her heart, and the first earnest prayer for aid to do right passed from her soul to God. All hail to it!

“Now, Charles, pray don’t,” said Julia, “I will give it to you with pleasure if you will wait; but, if you pull it, you will undo all I have made of this purse, and I want it for Kate Hamilton.”

“I won’t wait, I will have it directly; come, give it me;” and Charles Severn snatched at Julia’s work.

“Then, if you speak so, you shall not have it at all.”

“Shan’t I? you’ll see—here, Henry, come and help.”

“You cowardly boy—I tell you I will not give it to you.”

“And I tell you I will have it.”

But, though he pulled with all his might, Julia’s hands were so tightened round the silk that it was in vain.

“I told you, you should not have it; now you see I meant what I said—be quiet and civil, and I will give it to you.”

“I will have it now, this moment; so give it up at once, or it will be the worse for your fine purse.”

“ You are welcome to it if you ask civilly, not else.”

“ Catch me asking—you dare not keep it from me; I will tell mamma.”

“ No, do not, Charles,” said Henry; “ if Julia gives us the silk, I think we ought to ask her properly.”

“ Nonsense, pull away, she cannot run after us.”

“ I will not, and if you try I will help her; she is not half so cross as she used to be, and I will not tease her, so give up pulling, Charles.”

“ Who for, I should like to know?”

“ I will show you;” and Henry raised his clenched hand—Julia jumped up.

“ Here, Charles, here is the silk; do not fight about it—take it—and thank you, brother Henry, I shall not forget your taking my part; and now, as I am not busy I will help you to make that kite you were talking about yesterday. I have some beautiful paper, that will make a famous tail.”

“ Now have you, really, Julia? but I am in a great hurry, I can tell you, so let us set about it at once. We shall want some blue, and yellow, and green paper, and lots of string, and some paste, and a thick stumpy needle; and, oh, Julia! have you got a thin piece of cane? we must have that.”

“ I don’t know; but come into my little closet and choose what I have. Charles, is your kite done?”

“ I dare say you do not care a straw whether it is or not.”

“ Yes, I do ; because, if it is not, I will help you when I have done Henry’s.”

“ What, after his pulling your silk ? ” said Henry.

“ Yes, if he likes.”

“ Why, Julia, what is come to you ? you are not going to be good-tempered, are you ? ” asked Charles.

“ I don’t know ; but I’m going to try and please you with your kite, if you will let me.”

“ A comical thing you would make of it, I guess.”

“ Not if you will show me ; at all events I can try.”

“ Well, I should just as soon have expected to see you grow straight, as offer to help us with our kites ; there is some mischief behind, I know.”

Who can wonder if, so rudely and cruelly repulsed, poor Julia found her self-imposed task difficult and disheartening ; but the holy seed Kate’s words had sown lay deeply hidden in her heart ; and though she was often discouraged, and bitter retorts rose to her lips, yet she strove on, day by day, with earnest prayer and honest endeavour, to imitate the patient forbearance of her Saviour.

Just at this time a baby sister was born, and very great were the rejoicings. A lovely little tiny thing it was, with its feeble cry and soft velvety cheek, the image of helplessness and innocence ; and from the first Julia’s aching heart clung to it .

with eager affection. She would sit for hours gazing on its placid features, and often in the night, her quiet footsteps stole to the nursery door, to hear if all was silent there, and her darling sister sleeping.

A strange absorbing love had sprung up in her soul for the wee little creature; and, radiant with its holy light, her face looked positively beautiful. Every one marvelled at the alteration that had taken place in her manner and conduct, and all but Lady Severn were softened by it; but with the birth of the dear little Edith her aversion seemed to increase, and it was almost by stealth that Julia ever entered the nursery.

Gentle words, a meek and respectful manner—very touching in one so heavily afflicted and hitherto vehement—had little effect upon her stepmother's dislike; and, had she guessed how dearly the poor deformed one loved the pretty infant, she would have forbidden entirely all visits to her room.

“I am very sorry, mamma, indeed, indeed I am, but I did not mean to do it, only Maude was so provoking,” said Amy Hamilton, sobbing.

“And so, because she was provoking, you thought you must be wicked; is that it, Amy?”

“No, mamma, but she was so aggravating, and I was cross; and so, and so——”

“ You destroyed with one passionate blow all she has been working and thinking of for months; the pleasure she anticipated giving us at Christmas has been prevented by an outbreak of uncontrolled temper. I grieve for Mande’s disappointment, but more for you, my poor child; we may build her tree again, but who can give to you the love, the respect, the confidence your violence has banished?”

“ Oh, mamma, do not speak so! forgive me, pray do, and I will never give way again.”

“ So you have said many, many times, Amy; but until your resolutions are founded upon surer ground than your own strength, again and again it will be broken; I have no faith in your promises.”

“ Oh, dearest, dearest mamma, only this once—try me only this once.”

“ Not without inflicting some punishment, Amy. I cannot so constantly overlook a fault which, if now unchecked, must lead to your destruction; you will remain here alone to-day; your meals shall be sent by Lydia, but I do not expect to see you till to-morrow at breakfast, when I hope to hear you have asked Maude’s pardon.”

“ Any thing but that, dear, dear mamma. Emma and Rose are here, and they will know it all, pray do not keep me shut up.”

“ A month since you faithfully promised me

to watch your temper carefully, and assured me that you would earnestly strive, by prayer and exertion, to exercise a constant self-control—I then forgave you the punishment I had fixed upon—to-day a more serious outbreak, and instance of your determination to act upon impulse, has occurred. I dare not pass it over."

"Only this once, I will never ask again."

"Do not cry, Amy, but come to me. There, take my hand, and listen to what I say; I am not angry with you, but deeply, very deeply, grieved. I do not punish you for the gratification of my own anger, but because it is my duty, and God Almighty's command that I should bring you up in his fear and nurture. If I consulted merely my own feelings, without any reference to your eternal welfare, I should yield to your entreaties, and again forgive you, but I dare not; your soul is, in my hands, a trust from God, to mould and prepare for him—I may not trifle with a charge of which I do not know the year or day I may be called upon to give in my account. Of all my children you cause me the most uneasiness; you are no stranger to the precarious state of your health, the uncertain tenor of your life, if you allow your impetuous disposition to attain the mastery. You know (for Mr. Manners has told you) that a fit brought on by the indulgence of passion, of fear, or anger, may, in a few hours, terminate your existence. You know

(for the Bible and God's ministers have told you) that, as you die, so will you be judged ; beyond the dark grave there is no repentance ; you are to work here—to be paid hereafter. I have laboured to impress upon your mind that all that is good, and virtuous, and righteous springs from a rigorous self-restraint. When you raised your hand to strike Maude's Christmas-tree, you never gave yourself time for thought ; if you had, the consciousness of your unkindness to her, your disobedience to God and me, would have stayed you ; that one minute's reflection would have spared you the sin and me the sorrow for what you have done. As little time as that tree took to destroy would have sufficed to work death to a soul here and hereafter. I believe, Amy, you would not deliberately do an unkind thing to your sisters, yet no one gives them such continued annoyance ; want of proper control over yourself is the cause. The life of none of us is sure ; but how do I know that a fit of un suppressed terror at the sight of a frog, of passion at a provoking quarrel, or anger at a disappointment may not, this very day, cause the loss of yours. I must inflict some punishment, to impress more deeply on your mind the sin of which you have been guilty ; may God, my dear child, bless it to you."

" But any other correction ; pray, mamma, consider— ”

“ I have, Amy ; if it was no annoyance to you, it would be of no service.”

“ Any thing but staying in this room, mamma, while Emma and Rose are here ; any thing else—I shall be so ashamed to see them again.”

“ I am decided, Amy ; the punishment I have chosen is best for you.”

“ But, mamma, this once, only this once ; I promise never, never to do it again ; every body will know it—pray do not ;” and Amy sobbed till she could scarcely speak.

“ It is useless, Amy ; I am sorry to see that even now you cannot govern yourself.”

“ Then only till dinner time ; they will not know it then—oh, do consent, mamma, pray do.”

“ Till breakfast to-morrow. I hope I shall not be obliged to extend, instead of shortening the time.”

When Mrs. Hamilton left the room, Amy threw herself upon the sofa, and cried until her head ached so violently, that when Lydia brought her dinner she found her in so much pain that it was necessary to put her to bed.

The next evening they were to spend at Sir Grey Howell’s, but when Mrs. Hamilton learned how she had given way to passion the day before she would not permit her to join the party.

“ No, Amy. I hoped you would have avoided this ; your punishment has done you no good, for

you are still unsubdued, and I cannot treat you as if you had profited by correction."

"Now, Amy, you begin," whispered Kate, as early in the morning of the 20th of May, their father's birth-day, they stood beneath his windows; "your voice is the sweetest."

"Wait a minute, Kate, I am so nervous; do not you and Maude forget when your turn comes in the chorus."

"No, we will take care; now, Amy, screw up your courage and begin; make haste, or papa will be up."

In a minute, on the clear morning air, echoing over the quiet earth, not long awaked, rang the sweet voices of the children in their simple song of love—the composition of Alice. Amy's tones trembled when she first heard them unsupported, thrilling like a lark's in the sunny sky, and she had nearly stopped, but Kate's honest look of admiration and delight encouraged her, and louder and louder they rose, vibrating in the distance.

"Thanks, thanks, my dear children!" said Mr. Hamilton, throwing up his window as the carol ceased; "I never was so pleasantly awakened before; for I am rather ancient to be serenaded by such fair young damsels, and am quite puzzled how to greet you fittingly. I could almost fancy

myself a knight of romance in the old ballads, roused from sleep by a band of fairy minstrels."

"Really that is a very pretty speech, papa; and, in gratitude for being called fairies, we will hold you absolved from any further acknowledgment of our talents: only we have not quite finished our errand; we want to say in plain prose, and with all our hearts, "God bless you, dear papa, and send you many, many happy returns of the day."

"Yes, and may we grow better and wiser every year to repay you for all your care, and more like yourself and dear mamma," said Kate.

"More obedient, more patient, more *self-controlled*," said Amy, looking up and meeting her dear mother's loving eyes, and receiving a nod of approbation.

"Thank you, my darlings—as like your mamma as you please, as much better than me as you possibly can; and now, if you will order breakfast under the old oak, I will be down in a few minutes, and join you there," answered Mr. Hamilton.

By the time Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton came out, the children had carried two large arm-chairs under the oak, one on each side the breakfast-table, and adorned them with boughs of laburnum, lilac, and early roses, gathered before their visit to the window; and, when their parents arrived, they stood beside their work, eager to enjoy the pleasure of their praise.

“ Who has been the architect here ? ” asked Mr. Hamilton, looking up at the canopy of flowers and branches gracefully drooping over his chair.

“ All of us. I chose the flowers and cut them ; Maude carried them ; Kate tied them on the strings ; and Alice gave us directions . ”

“ An admirable division of labour, my dear fairies, and your queen’s pretty device has been charmingly executed ; my honours have quite turned my poor head, I think , ” said Mr. Hamilton gaily, pretending to feel it ; “ surely this is my coming of age ; I must have had a deep sleep, and dreamed that I am steady forty-three, when in fact I am only a boy of twenty-one. What do you think, girls—is it so ? ”

“ Yes, yes, papa ! ” cried Kate ; “ it shall be so ; never mind whether it *is* or not, it *shall* be so for to-day—and we will steal you from mamma, and make you run, and skip, and play at ball all day—no, not quite all day, you shall have your dinner—but all the time before and after—come ! ”

“ A little breakfast, please, first, and then— ”

“ Well—then ? no rebellion, no disobedience to our mandate.”

“ No, only—well, I will not tell them, ” replied Mr. Hamilton, as he caught a significant glance from his wife.

“ No secrets, no secrets, papa and mamma ; no whispering ; no sly looks ; *no secrets.* ”

“ One little one,” implored Mr. Hamilton ;
“ just one little tiny one.”

“ Not the least particle of one. How dare you rebel ? Reveal the hidden mischief instantly, or dread our displeasure.”

“ Guess, then.”

“ Somebody coming we want to see ?”

Mr. Hamilton shook his head.

“ A pony-chaise for mamma ?”

“ A boat on the lake ?”

“ A dance on the lawn by moonlight ?”

“ A plum cake as big as King Arthur’s round table ?”

“ New frocks for the school children ?”

“ The easy chair mamma wished for ?”

“ The red deer from Lord Severn’s ?”

“ No, no, no, no—two guesses apiece, girls, and still, *No.*”

“ Then, unless it’s a bevy of good people fresh from the diamond mines, or water-sprites from Norway, or a preserved mermaid, or a young mummy, I can’t guess.”

“ No, most imaginative young lady, not one of all those wonders.”

“ Then I give up.”

“ Oh, I know what it is !” exclaimed Maude ;
“ I saw a large box in Morris’s room as I came by, and I dare say it is the conjuror from the village.”

“ Wrong again, Maude; it is nothing that can speak, or eat, or walk, or talk; but something that can teach.”

“ Teach!—a book?”

“ A new map for the school-room?”

“ A cabinet of shells?”

“ It is of no use—I give up.”

“ And you, Alice?”

“ Yes.”

“ Kate?”

“ Oh, yes! I have decided in my own mind that it is a genii, like Aladdin’s, and the lamp is in Maude’s great box.”

“ No. Amy?”

“ Oh, yes.”

“ Well, as you are all defeated, suppose we tell them, mamma?”

Mrs. Hamilton laughed.

“ What have you all wished for, every day, since you heard Mr. Wilson’s lectures?”

“ Oh, mamma, is it really?” cried Amy, breathlessly.

“ Papa, is it possible?” exclaimed Alice.

“ A MICROSCOPE!” shouted Kate and Maude together.

Mr. Hamilton nodded.

“ Oh, fairies, genii, mummies, water-boats, farewell! your glory is gone for ever. A microscope! My dream by night; my hope by day; the very

thing I would have asked the lamp for ! Are you really come ?" said Kate.

" Really and truly, in the school-room now."

" It will not vanish away ? When did you see it last ?"

" How big is it, papa ?" asked Maude.

" Will it magnify water ?" inquired Alice.

" Will it show us the feathers on a butterfly ?" said Amy.

" Wait till after breakfast, and you shall judge for yourselves."

" Do not eat much, papa, it is too early to be hungry ; and it is not healthy by any means to breakfast so soon."

" I am sorry I cannot agree with you, Kate, I am really very hungry."

At last breakfast was over, and, to their great delight, they were introduced to one of the finest instruments Mr. Hamilton's agent could procure in London : they had all been well and carefully instructed ; and even Maude, though only twelve years of age, could appreciate the wonders revealed to her by its powers.

It was a lovely moonlight night ; the figures of the tall trees and picturesque turrets of Hamilton House were cast in long shadows upon the ground ; not a breath of air moved the heavy foliage, while the dew on the leaves sparkled like diamonds ; every now and then a deer crossed the open ground

to feed in some fresh spot, and at intervals the nightingales warbled sweetly and clearly. All was at peace and rest, sleeping in the holy light ; it seemed as if no evil thing could dare come nigh such perfect repose, for the silvery bark of the graceful beeches, glittering in the soft rays, looked like the figures of guardian angels bending lovingly over the earth.

The children had gone to bed late, tired with the joyous games of the day ; but, after about three hours' sleep, Kate was awakened by a smell of fire, and a suffocating sensation of heat. Unlike the generality of people, the instant she was awake she had full possession of her senses, and, perfectly unconfused, she could think, as well as act, at once.

She got gently up, fearful of disturbing Amy, who slept with her, and stood listening in the middle of the room ; a bright streak of light glimmered under her door, and she heard the crackling sound of fire ; she knew at once something terrible had happened, and that the house was on fire. Her first impulse was to rush to her mother's room, and arouse her ; the next, to pull the string communicating with the alarm-bell ; the last, to go quietly out of her room, and ascertain as quickly as possible the extent of danger.

She opened the door ; the other end of the passage was in flames, and the hot glow fell upon her face. She saw at once there was no time to lose ;

and, loudly ringing the alarm-bell, in a few minutes every one in the house was alive to the peril, and very soon all were gathered in groups on the lawn, that a short time before had smiled so peacefully in the moonlight.

Mrs. Hamilton had but just reached it, when she found Kate and Amy were missing.

“The children! Where are Kate and Amy?” she cried in terror.

“Are they not here? I thought they were all here—look—look—call them.”

They did so, but in vain.

“They cannot have left their room,” said some one.

In a moment the green was deserted, and all rushed to the side of the house where the two children slept, but before they reached it Amy’s screams came terribly distinct upon the night air, telling too truly where and how they were.

The wing in which their room was was one mass of flame; and through all the windows could be seen a background of fire, while every now and then a long tongue of flame darted out, quivered for an instant, then drew back, only to return with increased fury.

Before the window of Kate and Amy’s room was a small balcony, and while that remained, and they stood there, they were safe for a time; but, as usual, Amy’s fears had deprived her of the power to

reason, and she could not restrain her frantic screams for aid.

"Oh, mamma, mamma!" she shrieked, when she saw her upon the ground below, "come and save me, I shall be burnt to death."

"Keep where you are, darling," called her father, "and you shall be safe, I hope, directly; hold the balcony, and don't fear."

But, when the ladders were called for, it was remembered that Howell Abbey was undergoing repair, and every one had been borrowed by the workmen the day before; it was eight miles distant, and it was evident that the children's room would be in flames long before they could be brought.

The window was very high, and it appeared certain death to spring from it. Mr. Hamilton was distracted; he rushed into the house, and tried to ascend the burning stairs, but the intense heat and smoke drove him back, and there was no other approach to the room above.

The horror of all those assembled was overpowering, and the screams of Alice, Maude, and the servants mingled with those of the poor children above.

"Would they be killed if they threw themselves out?" asked Mrs. Hamilton of their father, in agonized tones.

"I fear so, dearest—yet there is no other chance, shall I tell them?"

"How long can the balcony last?"

“Perhaps a quarter of an hour; but their room, you see, is full of smoke, and before that time it must burst into a blaze—they will be suffocated: look—look—where is Kate?”

It was a dreadful height to look down from the balcony where the children stood to the ground, and they saw it was nearly impossible to reach it alive if they leaped out; but Kate recollected the sheets and blankets of their bed, and shading her eyes from the light, and covering her face as well as she could, to prevent being overpowered by the smoke, turned to go back into the room, but in an instant she was choked by the vapour and heat, and obliged to retreat to the open window; Amy seized her.

“Do not go, Kate; we shall both die. How cruel of them not to get us down! We shall be burnt to death.”

“I am afraid so, Amy, dear; but papa will do all that he can. They have sent off to Sir Grey’s for the ladders; very soon it will be known how we are, and perhaps God will send us help in time: but, indeed, it is very terrible.”

“Kate, I will jump down, I can but be killed.”

“Not till the last, papa will tell us when.”

“He does not care for us, I am sure he does not, or he would do something.”

“Hush, Amy, love. Dear papa is suffering as much as we are; try to be patient.”

They twined their arms round each other and leaned over the balcony.

“ My children, my children ! Oh, Father, have mercy on them ! ” cried Mrs Hamilton, stretching out her arms to them in agony.

“ Oh, mamma, save us, pray save us ! ” shrieked poor Amy, as just then a serpent-like flame wreathed round the next window.

“ I will try and get round to them. I am sure I can ; at any rate I will try,” said Mr. Hamilton, roused to frenzy by the pitiful cries of Amy.

“ It is impossible. Oh, if Kate could reach the bed-clothes ! but it is hopeless ; she would have gone on if there had been a chance.”

All this while people were running in every direction ; and now Mr. Hamilton ordered another horseman to be sent off to hurry the ladders ; but, as if to mock their eagerness, the fire burned steadily, resolutely on, towering up to the calm blue heavens in defiance ; and the misery of the bystanders at seeing its unchecked and rapid progress, and being so perfectly helpless, was extreme.

Many of the servants were busied in saving valuables, but Mr. Hamilton moved not ; with his eyes fixed on his children, listening with his very heart for the blessed sound of his returning messengers, he little knew, or cared, if all the fine old place contained was destroyed, so that God in mercy spared them. Amy, exhausted with terror, leaned power-

lessly against the wall, and Kate stood by her. They were silent; the mightiness of the danger, and their inability to do any thing, overpowered them; the children were crushed under a sense of peril; the thoughts of both were wandering over the happy day which had preceded this. Kate sadly recollects the joys of the morning, and as it is well known, when in the greatest misery, the memory often roams over the most trifling and foolish things, wholly unconnected with the scene of suffering, so did Kate's in that terrible hour. She could not help thinking of all the gay nonsense they had talked under the oak; their guesses, and their father's merry jests; and with those came a recollection of the microscope, as well of the pleasant lectures that had made them wish for one; and in an instant back on her memory flashed an anecdote the lecturer had told of himself. He had been, when a boy, in a house which was on fire, and to reach the door he had been told to creep upon his hands and knees, with his face as closely pressed to the floor as he could, and in that manner he had safely got out.

“I will try,” thought Kate; and, with a fervent ejaculation to her Father in heaven, the brave child knelt down and crept into the room. The smoke was so dense that she could see nothing; but the stifling heat told her that very soon the whole room would be in flames. She found that, although with

difficulty, still she *could* breathe, and she gained the bed, tore off the clothes, and retreated.

“Now, Amy, dear, look up, help me to tie them.”

A shout from below announced that they had seen her success; and Mrs. Hamilton uttered a short cry of thankfulness.

The children’s hands shook so sadly, and the clothes they had to tie were so thick, that it was long before one knot was done.

“Be steady and patient, my darlings,” called Mr. Hamilton, whose anxiety was now excessive; “you are safe for five minutes more at the least. My brave Kate, be sure of the knots before you trust them.”

“It will be too short when it is done, I fear, papa,” said Kate, trembling.

“The rope, the boat-rope,” shouted a man in the crowd, as he ran off in the direction of the lake.

In an incredibly short time he returned, then coiled it up, and, standing beneath the window, called—

“Look out, Miss Kate. I’ll throw it right into the balcony—do you catch it, and tie it on to your bed-clothes—look out. Now then;” and whistling through the air the coil struck against the window, and fell at Kate’s feet.

“Thank God! thank God! and you, Robert,” said she, seizing it.

“ Now then, papa, it is done. How shall I fasten it? Will the balcony hold? Be patient, Amy; you shall go as soon as it is safe, dearest.”

All was ready, and the two children stood eagerly side by side. Who was to come first? was the instant thought passing through the minds of all below; it filled their father's, till he could scarcely breathe for agony: upon the coolness, thought, and judgment of the one remaining in the balcony the lives of both depended. Who but the brave dear Kate was capable of the duty, yet who would dare to ask her? There might be only time to save one; whose voice would fix upon the sacrifice? but her words soon told her decision; she knew her danger—she knew that in all earthly probability she would never reach the ground herself; but, resolutely turning her thoughts away, she fastened the rope round Amy's waist, secured it in a firm knot, kissed her with the tears rolling down her cheeks, and said—

“ Go now, dearest; get over the balcony like a stile, and take care to hold quite tight; do not let go till I tell you. Now then, one more kiss: this for darling mamma. Now go—God bless and hold you; I cannot help you—I must hold the rope with all my strength—all depends upon yourself.”

“ I cannot go, Kate—I am so frightened, I dare not,” said Amy, shrinking back; “ it is so high.”

"Shut your eyes while you are going down: do not fear, God will watch you. Now go, dearest."

"No, no, Kate, I dare not—if it is so safe, why do not you go first?"

"Because then there would be no one here to help you, Amy; but pray, pray go, it is not safe to stay another minute. See, see, Amy," she screamed, "the fire is here now! Go, go, for God's sake, or we shall be too late!"

"Make haste, make haste!" called Mr. Hamilton, clasping his hands. "Why do you stay? Come, Amy, you will lose all chance if you delay."

"Kiss me and go, Amy. I will not let you wait: in five minutes it will be no easier, and, even if it would, by that time this balcony will be gone."

She did not move; with the hot air upon her cheek, the great height from which she must descend, before her, and the roaring fire behind, Amy became passive with intense fear, and Kate saw that she was utterly powerless.

"Amy, Amy, come!" cried her frantic mother; but she stirred not, her senses appeared to be forsaking her, she did not seem to hear.

"Oh, Amy, do not be so cruel! do not kill us both!" said Kate; "you *must* die if you stay here, you will be safe if you go."

"Amy! Amy!" shouted her father; but she

only trembled and shivered—the child was wholly without power to move or speak, so entirely had her terror mastered her. The fire was coming nearer and nearer, and all hope of saving both was vain. Mr. Hamilton called loudly to Kate to unfasten the rope from Amy and slide down herself.

“No, dear papa, never!” said the brave girl.

“You cannot save her, and I shall lose you both. I command you, Kate.”

“You would not leave me, papa, and I cannot leave Amy.”

“Speak to her, Alice,” said he frantically to his wife.

She tried to do so, but the words refused to come; they choked her. How could she condemn them both to death? How could she choose one for life, and leave the other? Kate saw the struggle, her true heart answered it.

“Do not, mamma, dear mamma, do not bid me come—you taught us to love each other.”

“Kate, you will drive me mad. Come down.”

“No. Oh, Father, have mercy!” she said solemnly, as the flames hissed close beside her; and, taking Amy in her arms, she knelt down and prayed.

“Another horse for the ladders—I will give all I have to the man who brings them,” said Mr. Hamilton, pacing about like one distracted.

“Here they are! here they are!—quick! quick!—bear up, Kate,” shouted a storm of voices as, at a furious gallop, they heard horses’ feet beating upon the hard road. Kate started up.

“Oh, thank God! thank God!” and she burst into tears. “Amy, Amy, we are safe!—look out, Amy, over the park. See, here they come, Sir Grey himself—dear, kind Sir Grey—look, Amy, look!”

But there was some way yet before them; and though the animals sped on like the wind, urged by whip and spur, it was very doubtful whether they could arrive in time.

“How slow they are!” cried Mrs. Hamilton. “Oh, come quicker, quicker.”

The fire now crept out and quivered in the balcony, Kate held Amy close to her, and, in the face of relief, saw death at hand; the ladders could not be in time.

The screams and cries of the crowd told Sir Grey the urgency of the case, and he redoubled his efforts: on—on came the animals, like lightning—he was in view of the children.

“Hold on, Kate—I will save you—go on, go on—Kate—Kate, bear up!” shouted he, as he flogged on his panting horses.

The window was on fire.

“Bless us—papa—mamma,” sobbed Kate.

Amy was senseless.

“ My children ! my children ! ”

“ The ladders, the ladders—here—here ; up with them,” screamed Sir Grey, as he drove into the crowd.

In a minute they were torn from the vehicle, tied together, and planted against the house. The fire had caught Kate’s arm, and she moaned.

“ Quick, quick,—let me go—I am the strongest, you follow me, Hamilton ; I will pass one to you, and bring the other myself ; hold the ladder you who are below—steady—steady,” he cried, as he sprung up the steps. He took hold of Amy, and passed her to her father, and then Kate.

“ My brave, good Kate, thank God I have saved you,” he said, as, holding her closely to him, he descended but just in time to escape the falling timbers.

In a state of perfect insensibility Amy was laid upon the grass, and it seemed doubtful if she were alive, while, completely exhausted with excitement and the pain of her burns, but very happy and thankful, Kate lay beside her, while a carriage was prepared to take them to Howell Abbey.

The morning was still and beautiful ; one of those sweet days in early summer before the heat becomes so intense as it does a few weeks later.

The trees were in full foliage and bloom, and the

world was gay in its young beauty, for the tender leaves, unscorched by exposure to the hot sun, looked as if they had but just escaped from their buds.

Except the rooks, who, busy overhead in the tall elms, were making their cawing, angry noise and quarrelsome flutter, all was quiet round Howell Abbey and within; but sorrowfully across the park, tolling from the village church, whose spire peeped through the trees, came the heavy sound of the funeral bell, and a few minutes after, their white plumes tossing in the sunlight, a hearse and mourning coaches drew round to the abbey door.

In a darkened room of the silent house, grouped round a coffin, were a lady and gentleman with three young girls; they all knelt by it, and their sobs were very mournful. The coffin contained the body of Amy Hamilton. The fits, so seriously dreaded by her mother, had followed each other in such rapid succession after the fire, that, till within a few hours of her death, she had never rallied or become sensible; and now she lay before them in that narrow bed, the victim of her own ungoverned fears.

They had been some hours in the room weeping and praying by the corpse, when a venerable old man entered, and, going gently up to Mrs. Hamilton, entreated her to leave the chamber: at first she refused; but hers was too well-regulated a mind to resist the voice of her revered pastor long, and with

one more earnest kiss and gaze upon her dead child, she suffered her husband to take her away.

When she was gone, Mr. Jefferies said—

“ Now, my dear ones, take your last look at poor Amy; till the awful day, when we shall all meet before our great Judge, you will never see her again: kiss her for your solemn farewell. How placid she looks now! how little changed! God has dealt very tenderly with you in letting her be so; you will have no painful memory of her now; but let not the lesson of her early death be lost upon you; I trust and believe she has found mercy at the hands of her Father, for during the last few hours of her life, while she was sensible, she appeared deeply penitent, and relying alone on the merits of her Saviour; but she might have been here now, a joy to herself and you, a blessing to her parents, but for that want of self-control, of which she was so often warned. Do not cry so bitterly, Maude, nor think me cruel to speak such words at such a time, but God has sent a fearful message to arouse you all; let not his first awful warning be unheeded, or the next may be still more terrible.”

The last look was taken, the coffin screwed down, shutting the cold pale face for ever from the cheerful daylight, and in an hour the solemn burial service, consigning Amy to the earth, was the last attention those fond hearts, mourning round the grave, could ever show her.

From that day a memory was all that remained to tell her parents and sisters that she had ever been among them. A melancholy summer it was to them all, for she had been, in many ways, a sweet, loving, and endearing child, and in their plays, at lessons, and most of all at prayers, they missed her sadly; they never guessed how they loved her, till her chair was empty, and her voice silent; then every remembrance of her hasty words and ungoverned temper was forgotten, and they only thought of the merry tones, the generous spirit, and affectionate caresses of their lost companion. The beautiful spirit of love had breathed on the past, and none but pleasant memories were left.

“Why, Fanny, are you crying?” interrupted Miss Norton.

“Yes. Oh, why did she die? poor Amy! I don’t like your story, Miss Norton: why did not your mamma make her live? I think it is a very cruel end, any body would be frightened at such a fire. I should, I am sure.”

“Very likely, darling; but that does not prove it would be right, you know. I am not at all surprised at her terror, most people would feel the same; but all who would be valuable to their fellow-creatures, or obedient to their God, must learn to keep such terror under the mastery of reason. What useless cumberers of the earth we should be if,

whenever an unusual or alarming accident happened, we were to let our fears, like Amy's, run away with our senses."

"But, Miss Norton, people cannot help being frightened."

"No, but they *can* help being weak and wicked, Fanny. Do you remember, last summer, when little Philip fell into the moat?" If your mamma, instead of throwing him your skipping-rope to hold by till her calls brought the gardener, had contented herself with standing on the bank screaming till assistance came, he would have been exhausted, perhaps dead; you know how she loves you all, and I think you may fancy that she was very much frightened, yet it did not prevent her acting wisely and readily."

"Yes, but every body cannot be as clever as you and my mamma," said Fanny, squeezing her mother's hand, and nestling her cheek into it.

Summer was gone, and winter had set in, when, to the dismay of the whole family, with whom she was a universal favourite, Edith Severn was attacked by scarlet fever.

Her mother was in despair; for, added to an excessive fear of the disease, she loved the dear little girl with an unreasoning and wild idolatry.

Under any circumstances, and in the best regu-

lated house, such a visitation is an awful one, needing much courage, patience, and activity, to make the attendants useful and efficient; but in a house like Lady Severn's, where every one, taking example by their mistress, was in a wretched state of excitement, fear, and uncontrolled anxiety, there was neither the quiet nor the judgment so needful to aid the efforts, and carry out faithfully the instructions, of the medical man. Of an impetuous disposition, which neither before nor since her marriage had been placed under restraint, at this time of trial Lady Severn was worse than useless. During the first two days and nights after Edith was attacked, she insisted upon sitting by her, distressing everybody with her frantic grief and gloomy fears, and tormenting the doctors with imaginary changes and symptoms.

In vain the physicians requested her to leave the child to the care of those more fitted for the charge, and reserve her own strength till it was necessary to rest theirs; she would listen to nothing, and when the crisis drew near she was so worn out by bodily fatigue (for she had wilfully refused all nourishment as well as rest) that she was utterly unable to render the assistance which, from a wise and patient mother, would have been so valuable.

The child grew visibly worse, and the medical men entertained little hope of her recovery; the only chance lay in perfect quiet, and the careful

watching and exact administering of a medicine they now resolved to try as a last resource. But at this juncture more depended upon the nurse than upon them; for calm judgment and prompt determination were essentially necessary for the efficient performance of her trust in their absence; and at this critical time symptoms of the fever began to show themselves in **Harrison**. No stranger, however clever and anxious, yet unacquainted with all the changes that had occurred, could supply her place; and now would have been the time for a mother's value and assistance; but what with her fear, impatient over-doing, and want of discrimination, **Lady Severn** was worse than useless.

Julia was sitting in the library, endeavouring to occupy herself with her drawing, when, returning from the sick-room, **Lady Severn** entered, followed by the physicians, and good old **Mr. Jefferies** the clergyman. Her ladyship was crying bitterly, and upon the countenances of the medical men was a perplexed and painful look of doubt; they went together to a distant window, and every now and then a word of their conversation mingled with the sobs of the distracted mother, whom **Mr. Jefferies** was vainly trying to comfort. Julia laid down her pencil continually, and seemed anxious to go to her mother-in-law, and, kneeling beside her, to share and soothe her sorrow; but the uncertainty of how her approaches would be received,

and the deep humility which, rooted in Christian ground, now rendered her meek and retiring, deterred her from following the impulse of her heart.

After a time Lady Severn joined the physicians, and in a few minutes the senior left the room, and Julia heard the following conversation between Doctor Stanley and her mother-in-law.

“ It is impossible, my dear Lady Severn ; no stranger will do, for not only would a fresh face agitate and frighten the child, but it is essential that the nurse should know every change that has taken place.”

“ Then what is to be done ? Surely, if I pay handsomely, we can get a fit person. I will give anything, all I have, to save my darling. Money will do anything, and I will give hundreds ! ” exclaimed her ladyship.

“ Millions could not save life. Money is not almighty,” replied Doctor Stanley in a voice of civil contempt.

“ No ; but if I am willing to pay any sum, it is very strange if I cannot obtain a common servant.”

“ To your ladyship it may seem so ; but, independently of the necessity for a person well known to the child, there are very few who would venture to run such a terrible risk as to nurse a patient in so malignant a disease. All your wealth, Lady Severn, could not replace to children the loss of a

mother, or induce a conscientious woman to sell for it the life that belongs to others ; past friendship, the remembrance of old loving deeds, must be your friend now, not gold. Is there no one who, for the memory of such, will come forward in your need to save this poor child ? have you no one in this high world bound to you by gratitude ? ” Lady Severn sobbed, but made no reply. “ Ah, my dear lady, see how powerless is now money ; with all your riches you cannot buy the loving service of a grateful heart, and none other can aid us now ; but in this emergency could not you attend Edith yourself ? Any one can do for you the active labour of nursing ; but a calm, patient, prudent watchfulness and care she must have if she is to reap the benefit of this last chance. We want no experience, no wisdom, only common sense and faithful obedience ; with these in her attendant, and God’s blessing upon our change of treatment, she *may* live ; without them she will, I fear, most surely die.”

Julia sprang up eagerly, and came forward at these words. “ May *I* nurse her ? Oh, mother, may I ! ” and she clasped her hands in her earnest entreaty, and fixing her large, anxious-looking eyes upon Lady Severn, seemed to read her very heart. But, agonized by the danger of her darling child, and indignant at the tone of Dr. Stanley’s remarks, her ladyship turned passionately round and said :—

“ *You!* do you think I would trust my child’s life in your hands, you wicked girl?”

Julia shrank back, and the red flush came up vividly on her cheek, dying it a fiery crimson; but in a moment Kate Hamilton’s sweet words at Fern Hill returned upon her soul like an angel’s whisper, “ Bear on, God sees and hears, and the night hour is coming, a rest for the weary;” and with the memory rose a cry for aid to Him whose ears are ever open, and she replied meekly, “ I would give my life for Edith’s, mother; do let me nurse her; I love her with all my heart, indeed I do; and I think she loves me.”

“ She loves you! How dare you think or utter such a falsehood? The very sight of you would frighten her; a beautiful person to have her love certainly!” said Lady Severn, with a bitter glance at the deformed and trembling girl.

“ Oh, mother, mother! God made me what I am,” cried Julia indignantly.

“ Silence! I will not be replied to; I am tired of your hypocrisy. I would as soon trust Edith’s life in the hands of a fury. Your heart is more distorted than your body, if such a thing is possible.”

The old fire of passion gleamed for a moment in Julia’s large eyes, and she uttered a shrill cry as if from pain; but when she turned she met the pitying gaze of the clergyman and Doctor Stanley, and, her

over-wrought feelings giving way, she burst into tears and rushed out of the room. An hour after this, the medical men, convinced of the incapacity of Lady Severn to undertake the charge of her child, and the hopelessness of finding a competent person to do so, met by the bed of the sufferer, and were joined by Mr. Jefferies.

There lay the poor little creature, to all human appearance dying; and, while every luxury and convenience that wealth could purchase was lavished round the chamber, no gentle and tender nurse, more priceless and valuable than all, stood by to take the orders and share the watch of the physicians.

“What is to be done?” inquired Doctor Walsh, a stern, wise old man, of his colleagues; “we are worse off than we should be in a cottage; there somebody would have their senses left, here there is literally nobody. Of all the evils we have to deal with, Stanley, I do think the present race of nervous, terrified, uncontrollable ladies is the worst. Oh for the days of our straightforward, obedient old grandmothers, who did as they were told and fancied nothing!”

“I can only think of one plan, and perhaps that is scarcely practicable,” said the surgeon, thoughtfully. “I mean the one I proposed to you, Doctor Stanley, this morning.”

“Well, what is it, Stanley? We cannot be worse off than we are. Is it *possible*? as for

wisdom, we must not pretend to that here," cried the irritated old man.

"To get Julia—Miss Severn, you know—to take Nurse's place."

"What, the cripple! my dear Stanley, you must be dreaming."

"With my eyes open, then, Doctor, and my senses too—but the difficulty would be to get Julia and Lady Severn to consent. After the cruel scene of this morning, I really do not know if it could be managed; if it could, we should be in safe hands with Julia."

"Poor lame thing, what could she do! she'd be frightened to death?"

"I think not, but I am sure her fears would not prevent her from acting calmly and as we directed; I assure you that deformed girl is the only one in this great house to be depended upon."

"That may easily be, and yet her powers worth nothing either, for such a set of ninnies I never had the misfortune to meet with before; a multitude of useless people running after each other like monkeys."

"Will you see Miss Severn, and judge of her capabilities from her answers about the child?" asked Mr. Jefferies.

"Yes, if you like. To be reduced to a cripple of sixteen in a nobleman's house, just for want of people with common sense."

"But I am not at all sure that now she will undertake the duty; after all that passed this morning we can scarcely ask her, I think," said Doctor Stanley.

"For that child's welfare I believe she will do anything; the difficulty will be, I fear, with her ladyship; but, if you can induce her to consent for Edith's sake, I think I can promise that Miss Severn will overlook all that was said."

"I will try," said Doctor Stanley, as they parted on their errand.

Upon entering Julia's room Mr. Jefferies found her on her knees in prayer, her face buried in the cushion of a sofa. After a minute she started up, her hair thrown wildly back, and her heavy eyes and ghastly face telling a sad tale of suffering: the clergyman took her hand, and, leading her to a seat, said tenderly,—

"You look very ill, Julia, and I am come to ask you to task your strength still further."

She gazed inquiringly into his face.

"Our little Edith is worse, the doctors think that during this night the crisis determining her life or death will take place, and she has no one to nurse her and watch for that terrible hour."

"Ah, Mr. Jefferies, you heard what Lady Severn said," cried Julia; "was it not cruel?"

"I did, Julia, and I grieved for you both, but most for her, because evil passions ever do less

harm to him who suffers pain than to him who feels them; still your cross is heavy to bear, my child; God has seen fit to lay upon your young strength a mighty measure of duty, but do not faint or tremble at its magnitude; He who imposes it knows full well your power to perform it, and watches to help your efforts with a father's hand."

"Am I so very very hideous, dear Mr. Jef-
feries?" said the poor girl, now weeping bitterly;
"I know I am deformed and ugly, but am I so
very hateful—*should I frighten Edith?*"

"Why do you ask me such a question, Julia! it
cannot be to reassure yourself, for it is impossible
you can believe those hasty and passionate words."

"Then why are they so often said? Oh, dear
sir, I will beg of papa to let me stay in my room
always, and then I shall not either disgust Lady
Severn, or be told such cruel things; I will never
see her again if I can help it."

"Indeed, Julia, I hope you will, and very
shortly too, for I am come to ask you to do her a
very great service—one for which I fear you will
have no thanks, perhaps even ungrateful and in-
sulting words; yet I both hope and believe that
you will not shrink from a Christian's plain though
painful duty on that account."

"What is it? why does she not ask me herself?"

"Because she is prejudiced and angry. I do
not exonerate her, Julia; but ask your own heart,

my child, if you have always been a patient, respectful, and obedient daughter. You think your punishment overpays your offences; it may seem so; still ever remember that kind or evil words are equally permitted by our Father in Heaven as the trials require in different circumstances, and, as such, are to be suffered or enjoyed in deep humility. Recollect that what our Lord said of himself to Pilate is no less true of us, 'Thou couldst have no power at all against me if it was not given thee from above;' so be careful lest, in resentment to the instrument He sees fit to employ, you rebel against the Lord's authority. It is for the agent not the sufferer to account to his Heavenly Master for the way in which the delighted power is used; each man's business is with himself, Julia, and it will be unavailing for you to plead Lady Severn's ill-performed duty as an excuse for your disobedience or sin. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, I hope I do; I will try to act as I think you mean. You wish me to do something that you fear will be disagreeable, to serve my mother-in-law, and by doing so to please God, remembering that he chastens me by her hand?"

"I do, Julia."

"Then I will do as you desire, if you will pray with me now for strength to resist all temptation to anger, and for power to bear everything pa-

tiently in submission to the will of Him who permits the trial."

Reverently, solemnly—because fully impressed with the conviction that God was by to hear and answer prayer—Julia and Mr. Jefferies bent to implore the help and grace she needed, and when he rose, and laying his venerable hand upon her head, the clergyman blessed her as she knelt in the name of his Master, a bright and holy peace, the beautiful answer to their petition, glowed like a radiance upon her face.

"I am ready, now, dear sir; what am I to do?"

"To undertake the charge of Edith; to peril your life (for I ought not to conceal from you that the disease is of the most malignant and infectious kind), and to do this not only without the common requital of thanks, but probably in the face of insulting and ungrateful expressions."

Her face grew a shade paler, and her voice trembled, but she replied instantly,—

"May God give me strength to do my duty, and curb my temper. If I am permitted to be His agent in saving that darling child, I shall be willing to lay down my life if he pleases. Come now, Mr. Jefferies, let us go; but first I will smoothe my hair and cool my face, Doctor Walsh will think I am in too great a hurry to be trusted."

In a few minutes Julia entered the room where

the physician was waiting for her. At first she trembled excessively, but she understood at once the prejudices of the grave old man before whom she stood, she saw the imminent danger to her darling sister if no one was found to supply Harrison's place, and, feeling that she could undertake it, she resolved not to lose the opportunity by a display of nervousness and fear; so she steadied her voice tolerably, and gave plain, clear answers to all she was asked, never speaking but when she was addressed. It was not the profession of feeling, but the weak yielding to it that Doctor Walsh disliked; he saw the effort, and the knowledge that she could, and would make it, was sufficient.

“If she has self-command to conceal her fears lest I should not allow her to nurse her sister, she has enough to ensure her acting calmly and judiciously in her trust,” thought he.

“Miss Severn,” he said, taking her hand, “I am very glad to trust you; you are a wise, and I think good girl; at any rate you have the seed of all goodness, self-control. Cultivate it, young lady; cultivate it; nothing gives back so rich a harvest for the pains. You remember poor Amy Hamilton? Ah, well, poor thing! she wanted it; and she died, you know. You have it, and your sister may live for it. Now, go to her room, open the window, and make all ready.”

She curtsied in silence and left the room, and that night, in the poisonous room alive with the pestilential breath of fever, Julia took her place.

On a table, close to her was a shaded light, a watch, and the medicine; if the patient slept until morning, and no change took place, there was hope; if she awoke, the new draught was to be repeated; and, in the event of the smallest alteration for the worse, the doctor was to be sent for.

She was sleeping now, and the bright scarlet hue had faded on her cheek; the little hands lay listlessly on the counterpane, their clenched grasp relaxed, and the burning heat gone. Her breathing and power to swallow seemed relieved, and Julia prayed with renewed hope.

Night was passing away, yet still she slept, for all had been so quiet that no sound save the occasional cracking of the fire in the anteroom could be heard. Just at two o'clock the door opened, with a creaking noise, and her mother entered. The child stirred restlessly, and Julia held up her finger.

“How is she?” asked Lady Severn, in a loud whisper.

“Better, I hope; she has slept very easily; but do not speak, I fear she is waking.”

Edith gave an uneasy cry, for a choking, gurgling sound impeded her voice, and Julia saw the crisis was at hand; but, though she trembled vio-

lently, and her heart beat fast, she was as collected and capable of thought as before.

“Please to send off for Doctor Walsh directly,” she said to her mother; “and call Jane here.”

The child held out her arms to Julia, and struggled for breath. Lady Severn screamed loudly as she sprung forward; but Edith pushed her away, and signed to her sister.

“Pray compose yourself, mother, you frighten Edith. Be patient, darling—take this;” and with great difficulty she poured a little of the medicine down her throat; it was very nauseous, and the child, trying to avoid swallowing it, let it fall on each side her mouth. Julia was resolute.

“I will not have her teased. For shame, to torment her so, it can do no good to force it down.”

“I must. I promised Doctor Walsh, and I must have it taken. Open your teeth, Edith; if you do not, I will call Jane, and she shall hold you while I pour it into your mouth.”

“No, no!”

“You know I will do as I say; so be a good child, and take it.”

“I tarnt,” said Edith.

“Very well; then I must. Jane!”

“I will not have it done. How dare you, Julia!”

“Mother, if she does not take this medicine, the

consequences will be very dreadful. I promised, knowing the difficulty I might have, and I am quite determined she shall have it. Now, Jane!"

She began to cry.

Lady Severn pushed past Julia, and lifted up the child; but her grasp was so tight that she cried out to her sister.

"Not unless you take the medicine."

"Then I will."

"That's right—there, now it is gone, darling, lean against me."

And the child nestled her burning temples close to her; but she could not rest so long, for her difficulty of breathing increased, and she seemed to choke. It would be at least half an hour before Doctor Walsh could arrive, and Julia felt she dared not wait so long. She had heard him talking to Harrison, the day before, of the good effects of a mustard plaster in a similar case; and, though never ordered to apply it, she saw that some immediate relief was necessary, and she determined to put one on.

As soon as it began to burn, the child cried, and attempted to pull it off; but Julia saw it was doing good, and, uninfluenced by tears and upbraidings, she resolutely held the little angry hands until Doctor Walsh came; and towards morning, as he stood by the bed watching the easy breathing and faint though regular pulse, he said, "She will live,

with God's blessing, and, under Him, *you* have saved her, young lady. But take care of yourself, you are looking flushed and ill, and your eyes are feverish. Take care of yourself, we cannot spare you."

And now very little more remains to be told of the story. Another short scene, and we will close this part of the history of Julia Severn.

It is a bright day in May, and in a long low room at Severn Court, her mother's favourite apartment, lies, upon a couch drawn close to the window, her deformed and much-loved child. The large quaint old window is shaded by a group of magnificent laburnums, which fling out their long yellow tresses to tremble and dally with the soft spring wind as it sweeps by; and twining round its trellis is a gorgeous foreign creeper, which, bending down its starry eyes, seems to keep loving watch upon the graceful child who plays beneath its shadow, making garlands of lilac and early roses to fling, with a merry laugh, at the occupant of the room.

Julia is recovering from an attack of the same fever from which Edith has been restored; and, during its long and weary course, her patient, untiring nurse has been her once harsh and passionate stepmother; heart-stricken by the self-forgetting, self-sacrificing conduct of her daughter-in-law, from the hour of her seizure she seemed nerved

with new and resolute power; and shut out from all society save that of the good clergyman, who thankfully embraced the opportunity of convincing her of her past errors, and listening to the plaintive wailings and piteous language of the sufferer, who in her delirium spoke constantly of the cruelties which had embittered her short life, she learned a lesson of penitence and humility that promised rich fruit for the future.

In the depths of the still solemn night—in its lonely hour—God came to the watcher; and when, returning sense brightened Julia's heavy eyes with its glory, their first languid gaze fell upon a face that was new to her, so changed was its expression, while reflecting the repentant and loving heart that was mirrored there. A deep, true kiss of love, an earnest thanksgiving for her awakening powers, gave Julia the first exquisite sense of happiness she had felt since infancy; and, falling asleep with her hand clasped in that of Lady Severn, her rapid and complete recovery dated from that hour.

A happy home is Severn Court now. A wise kind tutor has, in establishing a firm discipline and strict authority over Charles and Henry, metamorphosed them, from plagues and truants into kindly and gentlemanly boys; dear little Edith, like the good spirit who has, under Providence, worked these wonders by her sweet influence upon Julia's

heart, flutters about them all with fond words and caresses; and, in her Christian character and matronly beauty, Lady Severn passes on her way loved by all who know her, and almost adored at home; while Julia, dividing her time between Severn Court and Hamilton House, carries in her joyous laugh and unvarying amiability a balm for all the sorrows and gloom she finds at either; so that Maude and Alice are fain to say that Kate's occupation of peace-maker and mirth-inventor is gone, for that first in both is she who was once the saddest and most irritable of the group—the crippled, but sunny-hearted, Julia.

“Is that all? Oh, what a nice end, a great, great deal better than poor Amy’s. What a lucky fever that was; I dare say Julia liked the scarlet fever ever after, do not you think so, Miss Norton?”

“I doubt her liking the fever very much, Fanny; though I am sure she had great reason to be thankful for its effects, and the restraint she had obtained over her evil temper; you see Doctor Walsh’s words were very true. Amy Hamilton died for want of self-control, while Julia not only saved her sister’s life by its exercise, but, as a reward, was permitted to be instrumental in leading her mother into the holy and peaceful paths of religion.”

“Yes, I love her very much; more, I think, than dear Kate (though I like her and her fairies dearly), because she had more to try her goodness; but I cannot make out why Lady Severn could not get a nurse, if she was willing to pay such a deal of money.”

“I am sorry for it, Fanny. Money cannot pay such services, my dear, or, useful as it is, compensate for kind words or loving deeds. Do not learn to fancy it a reward for everything, or a licence to be cold-hearted and selfish; God’s reckoning with the rich man will often be a bitter one.”

“Money is a very good thing, mamma.”

“Yes, as all God’s gifts are to use for our fellow-creatures’ happiness and our Master’s service; but a hateful and baneful thing when, for its love, we shut our hearts to the cry of sorrow, or turn from the wretched. Grievous to him who does so will be the last great day, when before the Giver he stands to account for the gift; the excuse which satisfied him here, when he refused the help a sufferer craved, will be ‘weighed and found wanting’ in Almighty hands. In that terrible day, Fanny, money will not help him, rather press him lower, in the condemnation, for ‘the covetous man shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.’—But what is this!” exclaimed Mrs. Howard, opening a letter which a servant brought her; “a letter from your papa; my dear children, I have pleasant news for you, your papa is coming home to-night.”

“Oh, how nice; I am so glad,” said Fanny, skipping with joy, then suddenly standing still—“but *my* story. Oh, mamma, what shall we do about that? I have made up such a pretty one—something like yours—but not quite, rather more about fairies and bad children, and many interesting things. You will be so sorry not to hear it. I am sure you would like it; I thought so all the time I was making it.”

“Well, Fanny, it is certainly a very sad case, but as Emily and your cousins have neither of them told us a tale, suppose, when your papa goes into Scotland next month, as usual, we continue our plan, you will then have the satisfaction of amusing and improving us with your composition.”

“I hope I shall not forget it, for I have not written it down. I am very glad, indeed, papa is coming home, but he often stays in London a week; I wonder how it is he has done so soon this time. If he had stopped only till to-morrow night, or even till the midnight train to-day, I could have told you. But never mind, Emily, do not be very disappointed, I will try not to forget it; and I dare say papa’s coming back will make mamma nearly as happy as if she were to hear it now, especially as I shall tell her it all some day.”

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